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THE DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL
ON THE HUPEH-HUNAN PLAIN,
CENTRAL CHINA

*A Study in the Ceremonialism of the
Transplantation of Rice*

BY

GÖRAN AIJMER

STOCKHOLM 1964

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ON THE HUPEH-HUNAN PLAIN,
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To my parents

Preface

The purpose of this work is to contribute to the knowledge of culture and society in "traditional" China. The study is an endeavour to analyse an annual festival, held in early summer and related to agriculture. The work has been restricted to the great plain in two provinces of Central China, Hupeh and Hunan. It does not claim to be more than a first attempt to describe certain structures of this region. A complete reconstruction and analysis of the social and cultural life of past ages is a very great and time-consuming task. The chances of going astray in the very complicated material are many, particularly in the initial phases of this work of reconstruction, when so little is known. With this in view, it seems most convenient not to attempt to solve the most complex problems first, but to concentrate on smaller problems, on the solutions of which, after they have been subjected to discussion and criticism, future studies of more comprehensive problems may be based. It is therefore my hope that this study may, together with studies of other annual festivals, constitute a foundation on which to build a future conception of the annual cycle as one great system.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Professor Karl Gustaf Izikowitz, Göteborg, who, in spite of great pressure of work, has devoted much of his valuable time to discussion of inestimable value to me. Professor Bernhard Karlgren, Stockholm, under whom I have had the privilege of studying Chinese, has, by his encouragement, contributed largely to the stimulus necessary for the work. Many other people have given me very generous help. I must thank especially Mrs. Chen Chin-tsu, Professor Sigvald Linné, Docent Gösta Montell, all of Stockholm, and Dr. Carl Schuster, Woodstock, N. Y.

I am very grateful to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Stockholm, for the generous financial assistance that made this work possible.

GÖRAN AIJMER

University of Stockholm, March 1964

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I

Introduction

Curiously enough, China is one of the regions on the ethnographical map about which we know least. This is especially true of the southern parts of the country, from the Yang tsī Valley to the border regions of Further India. Ethnologists are not usually attracted by studies of large complex societies and civilizations, with their intricate systems. Another factor has probably been of great importance as far as China is concerned. To gain knowledge of social and cultural life of town and country in "traditional" China, the ethnologist has to rely largely on material taken from the enormous Chinese literature. If he also wishes to make an attempt to describe systems of symbols, a penetration of Chinese material will be necessary. It is not surprising, therefore, that most workers prefer other fields of study.

Several excellent works on social conditions in "traditional" China have appeared during recent years, devoting great interest to Central and South Chinese material. But it is clear that our knowledge of social life in the southern parts of China during "traditional times" is still very incomplete. This is even more true of symbolic structure. Many works have been written about Chinese religion, for example, but they are usually prone to generalize, owing to earlier conceptions of the uniformity of Chinese civilization. This literature includes many valuable works, but for an ethnologist the present research situation must still be regarded as unsatisfactory. There have been and still are numerous customs and conceptions which may be classed as common to all China, and the Chinese are undoubtedly "a people which recognizes its own integration".¹ On the other hand, there are also important local differences. One has only to compare the social organization in the northern

¹ Fried 1953, 2.

and southern provinces. Differences in geography and climate have created different conditions of life in different regions. The ethnologist must interest himself primarily in local material. A general conception of Chinese society and Chinese culture must wait until we have a clear picture of the social and cultural life in various small regions of the country.

The present work is, to the best of my knowledge, the first attempt to describe part of the symbolic structure of a certain limited area. The material is from the great plain in the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan in the Central Yang tsī Valley. This plain is a rather uniform geographical and climatological region. It is surrounded by mountains, described as "rugged" to the west, "rounded" to the north and east, and "hills" to the south. The region is a plain, but clearly not absolutely flat. It is said that "this region is studded with low, rocky hills". It has also been said that the geography of the Yang tsī plain might better be referred to as hydrography, for water is the key factor in the landscape. The region is full of shallow lakes, and is intersected by a network of rivers and canals. A large proportion of the area is water. The lakes vary in size between high and low water. The great Lake Tung t'ing is described as a gigantic swamp in winter. Water has formed the character of the daily life. Lakes and canals provide fishing waters, and are used in transportation. The chief crop is rice, which depends on whether the fields can be kept supplied with water by the help of extensive irrigation systems. Many families spend all their lives on the water in vessels of different kinds.²

The festival dealt with in this work consisted of a number of ceremonies, which varied greatly in different parts of the country. The name used in the western world, the dragon boat festival, is taken from that one of these ceremonies which was performed mainly in the southern provinces, and called *King tu*—"To fight and cross over". This ceremony was performed with long narrow boats with a dragon head at the stem and a dragon tail at the stern. They were employed in what might usually be described as a boat race. This race, however, was combined with violent struggles between the boats. The Chinese tradition associates "To fight and cross over" with a minister named K'ü Yüan in the feudal state of Ch'u during the fourth century B.C. He fell into disfavour with his king and committed suicide by drowning

² The geographical notes are from Cressey 1955.

himself. This minister is also regarded as the author of many of the songs in the famous anthology entitled *Ch'u ts'i*. "To fight and cross over" was a ceremonial search for and mourning of the dead minister.³

The "To fight and cross over" ceremony was mainly performed, as mentioned above, in the southern provinces of China. Mention of the ceremony has also been found in the northern provinces, but it is clear that in the north the ceremony was but a pale imitation of the great boat ceremonies performed in the Yang ts'i Valley and on the south-east coast. "To fight and cross over" was an important ceremony in the mountainous inland provinces of South China, too. A carefully plotted distribution map has been given by Wen Ch'ung-i.⁴ This author also rightly points out that the dragon boat ceremony in China was performed in regions concerned mainly with the cultivation of rice.⁵

Ceremonies similar in form are found outside China. They have been recorded in Japan, the Ryukyu Islands, Manipur, Burma, Laos, Siam, Cambodia, Vietnam and Java.⁶

The present work is thus an attempt to analyse the dragon boat festival as it was celebrated on the plain of the two Central Chinese provinces of Hupeh and Hunan in the Central Yang ts'i Valley. Formerly these two provinces formed one administrative district named Hu kuang. The regions studied comprise the earlier prefectures of Ch'ang te fu, Ch'ang sha fu, Yüe chou fu, King chou fu, Han yang fu, An lu fu, Wu ch'ang fu, Te an fu and Huang chou fu.

I mentioned above the difficulties met with by an ethnologist in his efforts to acquire knowledge of the social and cultural conditions of "traditional" China. The greatest problem is to penetrate the enormous Chinese literature. Only a specialist in Sinology can possibly survey this great material. One way out of this dilemma is for the ethnologist to make use of work done by Chinese scholars during past times. The thirst for knowledge in China has several times been manifested in the creation of gigantic encyclopaedia, intended to present the total sum of knowledge in existence when they were published. In these great systematic compilations an ethnologist can rather easily find the material he needs for his research. This mode of procedure has one draw-

³ Other explanations have also been given, but this is probably the background generally accepted throughout the whole country.

⁴ Wen Ch'ung-i 1961, 102.

⁵ *ibid.*, 103, 123.

⁶ Bishop 1938, 417 ff.

back, however; the critical treatment of the sources is pushed into the background in a way a Sinologist would regard as unsatisfactory. But in most cases we are concerned with printed sources. Genuine original editions must be very difficult to find. It seems reasonable to me to regard the encyclopaedia—which are not really encyclopaedia in the meaning the western world attributes to the term, but consist of systematically compiled quotations—as compilations of texts, just as other non-systematic compilations. Often it is only in compilations of this latter kind that one can find old Chinese works. Whether a text is available in such an edition or in an encyclopaedic version, it is usually a question of reprints of older editions which are now difficult to obtain.

For the present work I have made use of the material provided by different texts compiled in the great encyclopaedia, *Ku kin t'u shu tsi ch'eng*, usually known as *T'u shu tsi ch'eng*. The compilation of this enormous work was probably begun around the end of the seventeenth century on the initiative of the second Ts'ing emperor, K'ang Hi. "Like its forerunners, this encyclopaedia was designed to provide a comprehensive survey of all that was best in the literature of the past, dealing with every branch of knowledge. . . . The early history of this great undertaking is obscure. All we know is that the scheme of the work had been conceived and formulated by the emperor K'ang Hsi 'several decades' before the end of his reign, and that Ch'en Meng-lei was the man chosen to carry it into execution. . . . *T'u shu* was to all intents and purposes complete at the time of K'ang Hsi's death. Not only was the manuscript ready for the press, but the type had been prepared, and it is by no means certain that the whole work of printing had not already begun."

After K'ang Hi's death the work was stopped for political reasons. Ch'en Meng lei was exiled and a new editor, Tsiang T'ing si, was appointed. He completed the work officially, and the first printed edition appeared in 1726. A new edition was published some time after 1862, and a further edition, somewhat reduced in size, appeared during the years 1885—1888. I have used the last-named edition, which is to be found in the Chinese collection in the library of the University of Göteborg. The approximately 10,000 *küan* books of the work are divided into sections, two of which I have made most use of, namely *Suei kung*—"Merits of the Year"—and *Chi fang*—"Governmental Districts". The former of these two sections treats of the seasons and the different feasts of the year. The latter is the longest section of *T'u shu tsi*

ch'eng, with 1544 *küan* books. It gives detailed descriptions of all the Chinese *fu* prefectures in existence at the beginning of the Ts'ing dynasty.⁷

In references to *T'u shu tsi ch'eng* I have used the same system as that used by Lionel Giles in his *Index* to that work. Thus the sections are indicated by Roman figures; II stands for *Suei kung* and VI for *Ch'i fang*. Then follows the number of the *küan* and after that the subheading and page. The reference II: 51, 8a means that the text referred to will be found in the section *Suei kung*, in the fifty-first *küan* on page 8a. The subheading is not necessary in this case. The reference VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 6b refers to section *Ch'i fang*, *küan* 1202, under the first of the subheadings, which indicates descriptions of mountains and rivers, on page 6b.

The most important source of information about the dragon boat festival during "traditional" times in the region we are concerned with here is in an essay entitled *Wu ling king tu lüe*. This principal source is given *in extenso* in both the sections of *T'u shu tsi ch'eng* mentioned above. No author's name is given in the encyclopaedia, but Chao Wei-pang, who has written a commentary on the essay, gives the following information: "A rather detailed description . . . was written by Yang Ssu-ch'ang, a native of Wu ling, who lived 1588—1641, took his chin shih degree in 1610 and became president of the Ministry of War in 1637."⁸ Section XIV of *T'u shu tsi ch'eng*, *Shi tsu*—"Clans and Lineages"—, "a huge dictionary of national biography",⁹ gives information about Yang Si ch'ang's political career only, and his misfortunes and tragic death during the troubled times immediately before the fall of the Ming dynasty.¹⁰ The Wu ling mentioned in the title of the essay was the birthplace of Yang Si ch'ang, and is the same as Ch'ang te fu in northeastern Hunan near the place where the Yüan River enters Lake Tung t'ing. This town, as the capital of an underprefecture, was called Wu ling hien. Thus the author of the description of "To fight and cross over" was a native of the place he describes, and should consequently have been well acquainted with conditions there. This is reflected in the wealth of detail in the essay. It is only occasionally that he indulges in literary speculation.

⁷ Giles, L., 1911, vi ff.

⁸ Chao Wei-pang 1943, 1.

⁹ Giles, L., 1911, x.

¹⁰ XIV: 232, *Yang sing pu*, *Lie chuan* 8, 11b, 12 a.

The whole of *Wu ling king tu lüe* has been translated into English by Chao Wei-pang. This translation and the commentary have been of inestimable value to me in my work. However, I have based my work on the original Chinese text as given in *T'u shu tsi ch'eng*. My interpretation differs from Chao Wei-pang's version on only a few points, due mainly to the fact that Chao's translation in these cases is much freer than mine. Since this complete translation is available, there was no reason for me to give the whole of Yang Sī ch'ang's text. I have been satisfied to relate the material I have found relevant to my ethnological analysis. A few short excerpts from *Wu ling king tu lüe* have also been given in an essay by L. Hodous.¹¹ In addition to Yang Sī ch'ang's essay, I have made use of the many extracts from local chronicles, or "gazetteers" collected in the sixth section of *T'u shu tsi ch'eng*. Chinese literature contains a multitude of such local topographical, folk-loristic and historical chronicles, called collectively *fang chī*—"local chronicles". Surveys of provinces are called *t'ung chī*—"penetrating chronicles"—and compilations dealing with smaller regions *fu chī*, *chou chī* and *hien chī*, according to the administrative nomenclature. Occasional works of this kind are extant from the first century A. D. "Such local map-making, however, was slow to spread, for this kind of title does not appear much until the bibliography of the *Suei Shu* (late + 6th century) when suddenly many are mentioned. With the growth of a stable bureaucracy, in which men were generally sent to serve in places far from their homes, the local topographies acquired social importance. About + 610 the emperor ordered officials all over the country to compose records of customs and products, illustrated by maps or diagrams, and to present these to the imperial secretariat. . . . The Sung dynasty continued energetically this compilation and collection of local records."¹² The number of local chronicles increased steadily, until by the nineteenth century practically every place in China had its topographical and historical chronicle.

These works were not at first regarded as being of high literary value, but during the seventeenth century this view was changed, and such chronicles were generally acknowledged. Chang Chung-li, in his study of the Chinese gentry, mentions the compilation of these local chronicles. Sometimes the initiative came from official quarters. "Sometimes magistrates initiated the compilation of gazetteers although the gentry

¹¹ Hodous 1912.

¹² Needham 1959, 518.

did the actual work. In one example the magistrate not only initiated the compilation but also contributed his administrative allowances to meet printing costs." But usually the local gentry took the initiative, compiled and paid for the work. "One editor explained the purpose of such gazetteers as follows: 'For a district to have a gazetteer is the same as for a country to have annals. The gazetteer will narrate past events, and the knowledge of past events will enable one to predict the future. . . . The superior men in studying it will understand the developments [of worldly affairs], and the common people in obeying the tradition recorded can maintain their work.' The gentry believed that the compilation of gazetteers would help maintain general morality and their own prestige. Thus the gentry, especially the 'regular' upper gentry, were most enthusiastic in such tasks."¹³

In view of the great value assigned to such works during the later centuries of "traditional" China, there is reason to assume that the chroniclers performed their work conscientiously, and gave reliable information. There is seldom cause to doubt the contents of these local chronicles.

The periods covered by this material thus stretch from about T'ang and Sung through Ming. The greatest drawback in taking material straight out of encyclopaedia, as I have done in this work, is that the periods of the separate pieces of information cannot be determined. Even if one has access to original editions, it must often be difficult to say whether the work is based on an earlier version or not. Another obvious source of error is that the data are from different epochs. This diachronic perspective may, it is true, often provide valuable hints on changes that have taken place, but such changes may also be of disadvantage in a comparison of pieces of information widely separated in time. It must also be mentioned in this connection that the geographical distance between the places from which data emanate is great enough to be a source of error when comparisons are made. The Chinese ethnographical material is far too fragmentary, however, to allow of the elimination of such sources of error. Nevertheless, the material should make it possible to attain a high degree of probability in the conclusions.

My oldest source is *King Ch'u sui shi ki*—"Records of the Seasons in King Ch'u"—from Liang times (early sixth century), and describes conditions in the province of Hupeh. The boundaries of what was then

¹³ Chang Chung-li 1955, 66.

called the King Ch'u region do not seem to have been clear, however. Only the main text has been used. The commentary seems to be very speculative and can hardly be used in this connection. It is worth a study in itself.

- The dragon boat festival has been treated earlier by several workers.
- ✓ J. J. M. de Groot regards it as a summer solstice festival, and also mentions the time for the festival before or at the beginning of the annual summer rains. According to de Groot, the purpose of the festival was to produce rain. Referring to the ceremonial search for K'ü Yüan he says: "... dans la réalité on a mis des embarcations à l'eau pour conjurer le dieu des Eaux, dont la faveur était des plus nécessaires pendant les chaleurs et la sécheresse de la mi-été." Rain was produced
 - ✓ by a struggle between different dragons in the heavens, and it was this that had given the festival its form: "Certaines autres notions que les Chinois ont au sujet de la sécheresse et des pluies du cinquième et du sixième mois se rattachent visiblement à ces batailles de dragons, dont nous considérons les joutes des bateaux-dragons comme étant une imitation."¹⁴

- L. Hodous has expressed a similar line of thought: "The original
- ✓ idea was to sacrifice to the river gods for rain." With reference to the story of K'ü Yüan he says: "Kok Nguong [K'ü Yüan] stands for a beneficent force of nature to whom sacrifice must be made in order to obtain certain benefits. The legends are not the cause of the festival, but were probably produced by the festival to explain customs whose
 - ✓ origin was lost in antiquity." The dragon boat festival was intended to ensure the harvest by producing rain: "... we must conclude that the moving force in this festival which has survived the vicissitudes of several thousand years is the universal desire for a good harvest and for
 - ✓ rain upon which a good harvest depends."¹⁵

- An archaeologist, C. W. Bishop, has suggested a theory of the meaning
- ✓ of the dragon boat festival. He does not say how he has arrived at his conclusions, but makes only a summarizing statement: "In reality the rite appears to be one of rainmaking in connection with agriculture and
 - ✓ is pretty certainly of pre-Chinese origin. Not improbably it once centred about the very widespread notion of a 'dying god' and the return of the growing season."¹⁶

¹⁴ de Groot 1886, 358, 373.

¹⁵ Hodous 1912, 77, 80.

¹⁶ Bishop 1938, 417.

W. Eberhard holds the view that the festival was observed to give rain and fruitfulness. Rain is related to river dragons, and the boats were representations of these dragons. Eberhard's view is based on information from Kuangsi, where it is said that the boat leaders often killed people and hung up their heads, and on the fact that accidents often happened during the struggles between the boats, and many people were drowned: "Es ist aus ihnen vollkommen klar: das Bootsrennen ist ein Kampf von 2 Parteien gegeneinander, bei denen die unterliegende Partei geopfert wird." "Es ist ein rituelles Menschenopfer an der Fluss, um dadurch Fruchtbarkeit zu erreichen, und zwar ein Menschenopfer." According to Eberhard, the K'ü Yüan story has no connection with the dragon boat festival, but should be associated with a rice bread sacrifice to the malevolent river demons.¹⁷

Chao Wei-pang, in the commentary to his translation of *Wu ling king tu lüe*, has discussed the meaning of the festival: "...it is a ceremony to send away evils." "What evils are sent away or expelled? Some points ... suggest the answer that it is the deceased souls."¹⁸ W. Z. Mulder and C. Nooteboom have advanced views about the connection of the festival with rain dragons and the summer solstice.¹⁹ Finally, Wen Ch'ung-i has devoted a study to the dragon boat festival, but has not arrived at any conclusions of his own. With reference to de Groot and E. T. C. Werner (who gives a very brief account of de Groot's theory)²⁰ he writes: "It seems to me that these Sinologists have their good reasons to reach such conclusions."²¹

The present work devotes a good deal of space to a discussion of symbolic classification according to the *Wu hing* and *Yin yang* systems. These systems form two basic features of the general Chinese conception of the world. They can be traced in literature back to early, feudal China of the Chou dynasty. They played a most important role throughout the whole history of "traditional" China, not only in rural customs but also in philosophy and scientific thought. The *Wu hing* or Five agent system consists of a correlation and a classification into five categories of the features of the universe. Each of these categories is influenced by one of the five agents—wood, fire, earth, metal and

¹⁷ Eberhard 1942b, 422 ff.

¹⁸ Chao Wei-pang 1943, 10.

¹⁹ Mulder 1944, 156; Nooteboom 1952, 10.

²⁰ Werner 1922, 44.

²¹ Wen Ch'ung-i 1961, 124.

/ water. The *Yin yang* system consists of an antithetical classification of the features of the universe into one feminine and negative category, dominated by the cosmic *yin* principle, and one male and positive category, dominated by the *yang* principle. The *Wu hing* and *Yin yang* systems are correlated with each other. The agents wood and fire are dominated by *yang*; metal and water belong to the *yin* sphere. The agent earth holds a neutral position.

The dragon boat festival seems to have survived in a simplified form in China up to our times. Modern accounts describe it as a popular sporting event, with the emphasis on competition.²² But the dragon boat festival as a system of symbols and symbolic actions has probably ceased to exist. It was part of the traditional social and cultural life of Central and South China and, like that life, is a thing of the past.

²² Wang Ting 1961, 32 f.

II

The Position of the Ceremony in the Annual Cycle

Yang Sī ch'ang, in his essay *Wu ling king tu lüe*, states that the festival period in Ch'ang te fu began on the first day of the fifth month, when the dragon boats were launched. "To fight and cross over" took place on the tenth day of the month, and was repeated on the fifteenth. The closing ceremony, called *Sung piao*, was held on the eighteenth day of the month. Yang Sī ch'ang considers these dates to be the correct ones. Some changes had been made in his time, however. The traditional dates were not observed, but the festival period had been postponed somewhat, and the ceremonies were held later in the same month. According to Yang Sī ch'ang, this was mainly because the authorities had forbidden the "To fight and cross over" ceremony owing to the many accidents that had occurred. The authorities became less attentive as the month progressed, and the fight between the boats was staged later in the month. Thus the *Sung piao* ceremony was held about ten days after the correct date, or on the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth of the month.¹

Information found in a local chronicle indicates that the dragon boat ceremony in Ch'ang te fu took place on the fifth day of the fifth month or, as one statement has it, on *Tuan wu*, a designation usually applied to this date.² Local chronicles from other places in the region studied give similar dates. On the Hao p'o reservoir immediately west of Ning hiang hien, "To fight and cross over" was performed on *Tuan wu*,³ on the fifth day of the fifth month in Yu hien.⁴ A report from Yüeh chou

¹ II: 51, 3a.

² VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a, *Ts'ī miao* 2a; 1260, *Ku tsi* 2a, 4a.

³ VI: 1204, *Shan ch'uan* 10a.

⁴ II: 51, 19b.

fu states that the dragon boat ceremony took place in *T'ien chung*, a term usually referring to the fifth month. Another statement from the same place mention *Tuan wu* in this connection.⁵ At King chou fu, "To fight and cross over" took place on the fifth day of the fifth month.⁶ The ceremony was held the same day on Lake Liang tsī in Wu ch'ang hien. The *Wu* day, i. e. *Tuan wu*, is also mentioned in conjunction with Wu ch'ang hien.⁷ At Swei yang hien, the dragon boat ceremony was connected with the fifth day of the fifth month.⁸ At Han ch'uan hien the dragon boats fought each other on *Tuan wu*, and on Lake T'ao er, in the same under-prefecture, the ceremony was performed in the "p'u 'reed' month", i.e. the fifth month.⁹ The dragon boats performed the "To fight and cross over" ceremony in An lu fu on the River Han on the *Wu* day.¹⁰ The fifth of the fifth month is given as the date at Yün meng hien.¹¹ Finally, the *Wu* day is mentioned from Huang chou fu,¹² Kuang tsi hien¹³ and K'i chou.¹⁴ In earlier information in *King Ch'u suei shī ki* from the Liang period (early 6th century), it is said that "To fight and cross over" was performed on the fifth day of the fifth month.¹⁵

All these notices in local chronicles state that the "To fight and cross over" ceremony took place on the fifth day of the fifth month. The fact that this day is mentioned in the 6th century shows that it has long been connected with the ceremony. Yang Sī ch'ang's statements that the tenth and fifteenth days were the days on which "To fight and cross over" was performed thus differ from the dates mentioned in local chronicles.¹⁶ It is difficult to find reasons for this difference. In

⁵ II: 51, 19b; VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2ab.

⁶ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

⁷ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b; 1121, *Ts'ī miao* 3a.

⁸ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4b.

⁹ VI: 1127, *Shan ch'uan* 7a; 1130, *Feng su* 1b, 2a.

¹⁰ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

¹¹ II: 51, 19a.

¹² VI: 1178, *Feng su* 1b.

¹³ VI: 1178, *Feng su* 3b.

¹⁴ VI: 1174, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 17a.

¹⁵ *King Ch'u suei shī ki*, 11b.

¹⁶ In the mountainous region around the Yüan valley west of Ch'ang te fu, outside the area studied, the dragon boats were launched as early as the eighth day of the fourth month during the Sung period. Yang Sī ch'ang states that this date was connected with the manufacture of sails and the building of boats. In this mountain tract, "To fight and cross over" was begun on the

any case, it is clear that the dragon boat ceremony was not absolutely bound to the fifth day of the fifth month.¹⁷

Yang Sī ch'ang mentions a festival period beginning with the launching of the boats on the first day of the fifth month, and ending on the eighteenth day with the *Sung piao* ceremony. If this period is surveyed in the light of the material from other places in the region studied, it will be found that there were other ceremonial activities besides the "To fight and cross over" ceremony. Thus the fifth day of the fifth month was also celebrated in Siang yin hien,¹⁸ King shan hien,¹⁹ Te an fu²⁰ and Ying shan hien.²¹ The information from these localities says nothing about a dragon boat fight. The thirteenth day of the fifth month was connected with ceremonies in Mien yang chou²² and Han ch'uan hien.²³ At the same time as *Sung piao* was celebrated in Ch'ang te fu, i.e. on the eighteenth day, ceremonies were held in Ta ye hien,²⁴ Huang chou fu²⁵ and Kuang tsi hien.²⁶ The seventeenth and eighteenth days were also celebrated in Wu ch'ang hien.²⁷ The summer solstice, which occurs on different days in the traditional lunar calendar, although nearly always in the fifth month, was also observed. Records from Ts'ī li hien²⁸ and Ch'ang sha fu²⁹ tell of this.

The festival period in Ch'ang te fu, described by Yang Sī ch'ang, and mentioned in local chronicles from other places, covered the first eighteen days of the fifth month. The fifth month of the traditional Chinese lunar calendar corresponds approximately with June in the western calendar.

Wu day, and continued for three days. The ceremony was repeated on the fifteenth day of the fifth month, called *Ta shī wu*—"the Great Fifteenth". *K'ī man ts'ung siao*, 11b, 12b. II: 51, 3a.

¹⁷ Wen Ch'ung-i (1961, 94, 95) has collected much information from Hunan and Hupeh on the date of the dragon boat festival. It is in good agreement with information given in *T'u shu tsi ch'eng*.

¹⁸ VI: 1210, *Ts'ī miao* 2b, 3a.

¹⁹ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

²⁰ II: 51, 18b.

²¹ II: 51, 19a.

²² VI: 1142, *Ts'ī miao* 4a.

²³ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

²⁴ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6a.

²⁵ VI: 1178, *Feng su* 1b.

²⁶ VI: 1178, *Feng su* 3b.

²⁷ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

²⁸ II: 53, 8a.

²⁹ II: 53, 8a.

It is important for the analysis which follows to observe in this connection the circumstances which, with reference to production and natural environment, characterized this period. Some climatic factors are of interest. Geographical accounts of China state that summer in the southern regions is rather wet. From about the middle of June to the middle of July is a period which, in the central parts of the Yang tsī valley, is characterized by very high humidity and much rain. Masses of hot air from the South China Sea flow with the monsoon in over the region, and it is said that the daily maximum temperature for two to three weeks may exceed 100°F (38°C).³⁰ It is clear that the festival period we are concerned with here occurred before or perhaps at the beginning of this precipitation and temperature peak. It must also be observed that the summer rain does not always fall regularly, but drought years may alternate with years of floods. "The Middle Yangtze plain depends for its precipitation largely on turbulence associated with the polar front. Because of varying intensity of the interaction of the Maritime Tropical air and the northern Continental air, both flood years and drought years have been produced in the past. Strong southeastern monsoons usually advance as far as the North China plain, which then receives abundant precipitation, while the Middle Yangtze plain suffers drought conditions. Weak summer monsoons, on the other hand, meet Continental air masses over the Yangtze valley, which then has a rainy year while the Yellow River plain remains dry. This irregular shifting of the polar front zone produces alternate floods and droughts in the two great Chinese lowlands."³¹

The cultivation of swamp rice was, and still is, important in the whole of the middle Yang tsī valley. From Hupeh it is said that "Rice is the main summer crop" and from Hunan that "Rice is the universal summer crop wherever the land can be irrigated. The Tungting basin and the lower Siang valley are one of China's 'rice bowls'."³² Rice is usually sown towards the end of April on special plots, and the young plants are moved to the large fields after thirty to forty days. During the period between sowing and planting, the farmers are busily engaged in preparing the soil and flooding the fields. The winter wheat is harvested at about this time. The transplanting of the rice plants, which is usually done around the end of May or the beginning of June, is also

³⁰ *China proper* I, 203 ff.; Cressey 1955, 55 ff.

³¹ Shabad 1956, 135.

³² *ibid.*, 139, 142.

a period of intense work. It is followed by a time with relatively little work in the rice fields. Weeding once a week or so, and keeping the water at the right level are the main tasks then.⁸³

I have found only two reports of rice-growing in the local chronicles. In Kung an hien the rice seems to have been transplanted a fortnight or so later than the time given above as normal. The day of the full moon in the fifth month, i.e. approximately the fifteenth day, is given as a convenient time for this phase in the cultivation of rice.⁸⁴ In the region around Han yang fu, rice was sown and the fields flooded at *ch'un fen shi*—"spring division time"—that is, during that one of the twenty-four Chinese solar periods named after the spring equinox, corresponding approximately with the period 20 March to 5 April in the western calendar. Transplanting was begun a month or so later in "the change from spring to summer".⁸⁵ Both these statements imply some weeks' difference from what is said to be the normal time. This may have been why they were mentioned in the chronicles. Local factors have undoubtedly been of influence.⁸⁶

There seems reason to seek a relationship between the dragon boat festival and the phase in the production cycle described. I think it feasible to assume that the dragon boat ceremonies must usually have been performed after the rice had been transplanted, for, from about the middle of April until the beginning of June, the hard work in the rice fields took all the time, and it must have been extremely difficult to perform the complicated and time-consuming ceremonies during that period. After the rice plants had been transplanted, the farmers were free from heavy work, and had more time "to fight and cross over".⁸⁷

One of the essential factors in the economic life of the plains of Hupeh and Hunan was the cultivation of rice. It was rice that gave the people most of their livelihood. During the summer months the cultivation of rice must have been the cardinal interest of the people.

⁸³ Wagner 1926, 283, 286 ff., 294.

⁸⁴ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 3a.

⁸⁵ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 2a.

⁸⁶ Cf. Gallin's (1960, 637) information from Taiwan.

⁸⁷ Eberhard (1942b, 232) has taken data from a collection of writings dating from T'ang times, *Yüan shi ch'ang k'ing tsi*: "... Es wird dort gesagt, dass in Yüe-yang (Hunan) im 4.—5. Monat der Weizen reif wird und dass dann sofort die Felder nassgemacht werden und der Reis piquiert wird. In dieser Zeit findet das Bootswettfahren statt und grosse Opfer, die mehrere zehn Tage lang dauern."



The activities connected with the different phases of the cultivation of rice must have been teeming with value-creating meaning. This was most likely particularly true of the important and sensitive process of transplantation. The starting-point of my analysis is that the ceremonies during the festival period under consideration in the fifth month were the symbolic aspect of the transplantation of rice, isolated in form, time and space. The climatological factors mentioned above are also of importance. Warmth and much rain favour the newly-planted rice. Although the Hupeh-Hunan plain has a very extensive irrigation system, it is still partly dependent on summer rain, and a period of drought may cause much damage. These circumstances are intimately concerned with transplantation. On the basis of a stimulating account by Fredrik Barth,³⁸ in which he says that "Ritual is the symbolic aspect of acts in contexts vested with particular value", we may regard these ceremonies as the symbolic aspect of the transplantation of rice, which in this region so dependent on rice, must have been endowed with particular value.

It has been shown above that several accounts associate the dragon boat ceremony with a day called *Tuan wu*, or the *Wu* day, i.e. the fifth day of the fifth month. *Tuan wu* may be translated "The Correct Middle". One example of the fifth month being called *T'ien chung*, "In the Middle of the Heavens", has been mentioned above. The Chinese *Wu hing* system relates the five agents to different numbers, points of the compass and seasons. Thus the number five is related to the agent earth and the centre of the compass. On the other hand, five is not associated with any special season of the year. Since only four seasons exist, it has been assumed that the earth agent, from its central position, helped and controlled the other four agents in their work of guiding the four seasons.

The fifth month, also called "In the Middle of the Heavens", was clearly associated with direction towards the centre. The fifth day of the fifth month, with its reiteration of the number five, should therefore have been especially strongly associated with the centre, and its name, "The Correct Middle", is further evidence of this. The fifth month cannot possibly have been the centre of the lunar calendar, however. On the other hand, the mid-point of the solar calendar, the summer solstice, most often occurred in the fifth lunar month, which

³⁸ Barth 1961, 147.

thus came to be regarded as the middle of the solar and productive year. The fifth day of the fifth month, "The Correct Middle", was probably regarded as the middle of the solar year placed in the lunar calendar, i.e. the day of the solstice projected into the lunar calendar. The actual day of the summer solstice was hardly observed at all on the Hupeh-Hunan plain, as far as can be gathered from the material collected in *T'u shu tsi ch'eng*. Two accounts given earlier should be observed here. One was from Ts'ī li hien³⁹ and tells that the weather was studied at "The High Point of Summer". If it rained then, fruitfulness followed, but if the sky was clear, rain would fall towards autumn. In the region of Ch'ang te fu people in the villages made *sī* sacrifices to the earth, and held a drinking feast in honour of the earth spirit. This custom was evidently a way of stressing the connection between the middle and earth.

A notice in *King Ch'u suei shī ki* is of interest in this connection. It is said there that, on the Hupeh plain at the time of "The High Point of Summer", a kind of dumpling called *tsung* was eaten.³⁹ According to all later data, these dumplings were eaten on *Tuan wu*. This interchange is in good agreement with the discussion above. Another example of a day in the solar calendar being projected into and mainly observed in the lunar calendar, also noted in *King Ch'u suei shī ki*, is *Han shī*—"Cold Food"—, which, in the solar calendar, falls 105 days after the winter solstice. Its equivalent in the lunar calendar is *Ts'ing ming*—"Clear and Bright"—on the third day of the third month. The solar calendar gave the chronological pragmatic landmarks necessary for production, but these landmarks were observed ceremonially according to the lunar calendar. The summer solstice was probably the pragmatic landmark indicating the end of the transplantation of rice and the beginning of the summer rain, but was observed ceremonially on *Tuan wu* in the lunar calendar.

³⁹ *King Ch'u suei shī ki*, 12b.



III

Some Features of the Social Structure

Yang Sī ch'ang's account contains a few references to social conditions, of importance for an understanding of "To fight and cross over" and ceremonialism during the fifth month. Yang Sī ch'ang states that the boats belonged to special clearly defined regions. It can be gathered from the account that there was marked rivalry between groups of people living in regions associated with different boats. It is said that they quarrelled about which boat would win or lose, but it was clear that this rivalry was of a far more fundamental character. The division into boat regions expressed an essential feature of the social organization. If a person whose ancestors had lived in a region associated with a certain boat moved out of this region to live in one associated with another boat, he was still regarded as a member of the group to which his ancestors had belonged.¹

When spectators congregated to watch the great ceremony in Ch'ang te fu, they gathered in tall buildings, hired in advance, on the north bank of the Yüan River. But it was only within one's own region that one could rent such buildings. No-one was allowed to leave his own region to go into one associated with another boat while the ceremony was being performed. If anyone tried to do so, he was clearly chased away with violence.² Similar circumstances seem to have prevailed in Wu ch'ang hien. While "To fight and cross over" was in progress, there were different parties along the river banks—apparently associated with different boats—who fought against each other.³

¹ II: 51, 7a.

² II: 51, 7b.

³ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

Yang Sī ch'ang's account also contains information on the behaviour of the onlookers towards a boat as it passed the various boat regions. When it passed its own region, the spectators made presents of pieces of red and green silk. Fireworks were lighted, and the onlookers waved fans and applauded. When a boat passed a rival region, the onlookers shouted angrily and threw stones at the boat. The boat's crew replied by holding their paddles horizontally and shaking their hands to demonstrate their strength, that is, they acted as if fighting another boat taking part in the ceremony.⁴

We find, therefore, that people were divided into groups according to boat regions. A person was born into such a boat region and could not renounce or change his affinity to the group. It seems as if the whole group took part symbolically in the ceremonial fight. The crews of the dragon boats were naturally the principal representatives of the group, but the behaviour of the spectators and the crew's responses suggest that the fight between the boats was actually a struggle between the boat regions and their inhabitants.

In the time of Yang Sī ch'ang, six boats took part in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony in Ch'ang te fu. The author gives a list of the names of the regions associated with each of these dragon boats. The names of several places belonged to each boat. It is impossible to discover from the text what ties united these places and associated them with a common dragon boat. The names most likely refer to villages lying along the Yüan River. Some of the names seem to suggest definite functions, ferries, for example, or special natural features of the places. Others were conventional.

There was a region in King chou fu called Po ch'uan—"The White Boat". It was situated at a place where boats "fought and crossed over". This may have been a boat region of the same type as those in Ch'ang te fu.⁵

There is reason to suppose that each such village was inhabited by a number of *kia* families, all of which bore the same family name. The term *kia* is described as follows: "The *chia* is the relationship group holding property in common and maintaining a common household. At times it consists of just the conjugal family, but it may embrace an extended family of three, more seldom four or five genera-

⁴ II: 51, 6b, 7b.

⁵ VI: 1194, *Ts'ī miao* 2, 1a.

tions with all their descendants.”⁶ Like Maurice Freedman,⁷ I translate *kia* “family”. The circumstance that all families living in the same village had a common family name, that is, they belonged to the same *tsu* group, is well known from great tracts in Central and South-eastern China. “In the last six or seven centuries the centers of the strongly developed *tsu* have lain in Central and Southeast China, that is, the Yangtze Valley, and the provinces of Fukien and Kuangtung. Here many villages are inhabited completely or predominantly by people of a single surname, recognizing a relationship among themselves. A few families of different surnames may be tolerated, but they are always regarded as strangers, even after generations of residence, and have no part in community affairs.”⁸ Two or more *tsu* might inhabit the same village, but then there were always definite boundaries between their different territories in the village. At any rate, this was the case on the south-east coast, a region which, in comparison to the Yang *tsi* valley, has been studied carefully.⁹ It must be added that a *tsu* or *tsung tsu* “is a group descended from one ancestor who settled in a certain locality or neighbourhood.”¹⁰ In agreement with Freedman, I translate the term *tsu* “lineage”.¹¹

A further variation of the lineage/village pattern might occur. Thus a *tsu* lineage might be spread over a greater area and inhabit several villages. “The *tsu* always consists of a number of lines of descent, usually called *fang* or ‘house’ descended from the sons of the common ancestor who first settled in the locality. When a *tsu* grows large and spreads out into villages in the neighborhood or in adjacent regions, the ancestral hall in the old home remains the focus of group interest and group activities.”¹² Thus we find that there might have been villages at some distance from each other, whose inhabitants were united by a common descent with social, economic and ceremonial implications. It seems to me that the last-named pattern might be applied to the material from Ch’ang te fu. The villages enumerated by Yang *Si* ch’ang in conjunction with the boat regions were most

⁶ Hu Hsien chin 1948, 15f.

⁷ Freedman 1958, 37.

⁸ Hu Hsien chin 1948, 15.

⁹ Cf. Freedman 1958, 3.

¹⁰ Hu Hsien chin 1948, 18.

¹¹ Freedman 1958, 2, 36.

¹² Hu Hsien chin 1948, 18 f.

likely each inhabited by a single *fang*, or sublineage.¹³ It was the common *tsu* organization that united the different villages belonging to a certain dragon boat. The *tsu* group was represented by a boat taking part in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony.

This seems to me the most feasible way of explaining the statements made in Yang Sī ch'ang's text. This, naturally, is only a hypothesis. My material does not allow of any definite conclusions, and we must be satisfied with this probability. The hypothesis is supported by at least one place-name—that of a village lying fifteen *li* east of the capital of the prefecture—mentioned in conjunction with the boat regions. The name is Su kia tu, "The Ferry of the Su Families". This name suggests that the village was inhabited by a group of people with the family name of Su. For comparison, a place fifty *li* west of Ch'ang te fu, called T'ang kia wan—"The Bend of the T'ang Families"—, may be mentioned; ninety *li* to the south was another village, called T'ang kia k'i—"The Brook of the T'ang Families". There was obviously a lineage named T'ang in this region; the burial place of the lineage was at Ch'uan tsī k'iao kang, eight *li* to the west of the capital of the prefecture.¹⁴ It seems likely that the villages whose names included this lineage name were inhabited by *fang* belonging to this *tsu*. Still another geographical name in Yang Sī ch'ang's essay, Tuan kia tsuei—"The Tuan Families' (River) Mouth"—suggests that this village was inhabited by people with the family name Tuan. We also know that there really was a lineage named Tuan in the Ch'ang te fu region, for Yang Sī ch'ang mentions the family name Tuan in another connection.

Two family names in Ch'ang te fu were particularly famous in connection with the "To fight and cross over" ceremony, namely Juei and the above-mentioned Tuan. It has earlier been shown that the name Su was related to a certain boat. Still another place-name, Yü kia kang, was also connected with one of the boats taking part in the ceremony, which suggests a lineage with the name Yü. This is not certain, however, for Yü may not be a name, but may simply mean "fisherman".¹⁵

It will be fitting here to consider the situation prevailing with reference to the connections between the various *tsu* groups. Hu Hsien

¹³ Freedman 1958, 36.

¹⁴ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7ab.

¹⁵ II: 51, 4a, 6b, 7a.

chin has given a detailed account of the conflicting elements in the inter-lineage relationships in Central and South China. Her account shows that there was often great tension between *tsu*. The great value of the agnatic ties of kinship in combination with struggles for prestige, and, with prestige, greater influence in the community and a better economic status, are said to have been the operative factors behind this tension and rivalry. "... the esprit de corps which animates the *tsu* and causes the individual to use his fortune for the welfare and prestige of near and distant relatives, inevitably fosters a feeling of rivalry between such groups." Open and organized feuds were common, and might at times, particularly on the south-east coast, be almost military in character. This pattern of rivalry was also valid for the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan.¹⁶

The Chinese *tsu* was exogamous, and since every village on the Hupeh-Hunan plain was evidently dominated by such a lineage or sublineage, this meant that perhaps the most important inter-village relationships were the links of marriage between them: "In China as a whole villages tended markedly to exchange their women in marriage, but when the village and lineage were identified the rule of exogamy made this change compulsory. The majority of the women members of the local community were at one time outsiders in the sense that their original families lived elsewhere."¹⁷ The links of marriage between lineages have been the subject of some discussion during recent years. The *tsu* group was patrilineal and patrilocal. E. R. Leach¹⁸ earlier advanced the theory that marriage usually took place in accordance with the patrilineal "Kachin type", that is, with asymmetrical matrilineal cross-cousin marriages. This system implies that each *tsu* had a *tsu* partner, from which its members received women, and another *tsu* partner to which women were delivered, and that the bride-taking *tsu* was of higher status than the bride-giving *tsu*. On the basis of more comprehensive material from the south-east coast and Taiwan, M. Freedman and B. Gallin have shown that marriages were by no means arranged so systematically. Freedman writes: "All that we know points to a situation in which the marriage connections of a particular localized lineage were cast in many directions."¹⁹ Gallin

¹⁶ Hu Hsien chin 1948, 91 ff.

¹⁷ Freedman 1958,, 96.

¹⁸ Leach 1952. Cf. Leach 1961, 54.

¹⁹ Freedman 1958, 100.

found that in a village on Taiwan—with several *tsu*, however—all kinds of cousin marriages were relatively rare, and that most of the women marrying into the *tsu* came from families without any ties of relationship with the family receiving the bride. The 154 married women in this village came from 52 different places.²⁰ Nevertheless, the bride-taking *tsu* group seemed to be of a higher status in relation to the bride-giving *tsu*. On the lower Yang tsī plain the bride's marriage portion was twice as great as the receiver's "bride price", or, at least, this was the ideal. The large dowry was intended explicitly to raise the status of the bride in her new home.²¹

Some information is available from the plain of Hupeh. A compilation of customary law dated 1930 gives a few data on marriages in this province. In King shan hien, T'ung shan hien and Ts'ien kiang hien, cousin marriages referred to mother's brother's daughter and mother's sister's daughter. In Ma ch'eng hien and Han yang fu it was apparently possible for a man to marry any of his non-agnatic cousins.²² Nothing is said about what was to be preferred or to what extent cousin marriages occurred in these places. F. Hsu's statement: "With minor exceptions . . ., in all Chinese localities about which I have knowledge, the preferred mating (not compulsory) is the FSS-MBD type, while the disfavoured mating is the FSD-MSB type in all shades",²³ is based partly on personal experience from Hupeh.

It is impossible to arrive at any definite conclusions on the basis of the present material. Nevertheless, it seems rather unlikely that there were any definite marriage systems on the Hupeh-Hunan plain, but the brides marrying into a lineage village came from many different places, as we know they did on the south-east coast. These data on the links of marriage are of interest to our study, since the matrimonial grouping was identical with the ceremonial grouping in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony.

²⁰ Gallin 1963, 106 f.

²¹ Fei Hsiao tung 1939, 43 f.

²² van der Valk 1956, 28.

²³ Hsu 1945, 84.

IV

The Crews of the Dragon Boats

We have seen earlier that the whole *tsu* group took part actively in the ceremony. In Ch'ang te fu, people stood along the banks of the river in their own boat region to watch the struggle between the boats. When a rival boat passed, the onlookers shouted angrily and threw stones at it. When their own boat came along, presents of red and green silk were made to the crews. Those who performed most of the ceremonial actions were naturally the crews of the dragon boats. Yang Sī ch'ang's account of the ceremony in Ch'ang te fu contains interesting information about the crews. At this place the crews of the large fighting boats were recruited from fishing families living along the south bank of the Yüan River. They were strong and experienced men, nicknamed *shuei lao ya*—"water crows". Their help was ensured in advance and they were paid for their services in money and rice. On a certain day, determined by *chan* divination, the men who were to paddle the boat were selected. Several tests were made to find the strongest men, who should also be able to paddle in time. Those who, for some reason or other, refused to participate in the fierce fight between the boats could evidently be compelled ceremonially to take part. This was done by handing such people as refused a piece of red cloth, about three to five *ch'i* long.¹ No direct statement is made concerning the implications of this red cloth. In the general Chinese classifying agent theory, *Wu hing*, red belongs to the same category as fire and south. This category is associated in its turn with the male *yang* principle. It may be said that the red colour of the cloth in this connection

¹ II: 51, 3b.

stresses the community of the *tsu* group, which, by virtue of the patrilineal descent must have been related to the male *yang* principle.

The members of the crews were called *na jao*—"hold the paddle". The boats were manned by forty to eighty men, according to the length of the boat.²

The crews were complemented by other men, with more special functions. One of these was called *t'ou*—"head"—and he stood in the stern of the boat. The man selected to be the *t'ou* of a boat had to occupy a high social position. "Fists and courage" were also considered necessary. Several days before the "To fight and cross over" ceremony the *t'ou* sent out a printed sheet of paper and steamed *mien*, a kind of vermicelli, in the form of cakes, to those belonging to the boat, who gave money, food and wine in return. A picture of the dragon boat headed the paper sent round. At the bottom were a few sentences. The text gives no indication of their purport. Before the great boat ceremony began, the boats paid a visit to the officials of the town, who watched the fight from special buildings along the banks of the river. The *t'ou* greeted them with bows and genuflection both from the boat and in the buildings. It was also the *t'ou* who, the night before the ceremony, supplied sacrificial animals and invited a sorcerer to perform certain practices.³

Mien vermicelli was also used on other occasions in Ch'ang te fu. At the *Shang yüan* festival around the fifteenth day of the first month, *mien wo*—"vermicelli nests"—were made in the form of chickens. Twelve such nests were made, as "images of the twelve months". They were steamed in a rice-cooker, and by this process the amount of precipitation during the different months was predicted. At the winter solstice, *mi mien*—"rice vermicelli"—was eaten and also sent as presents. No exact information is given in this account as to who exchanged the presents. *Mi mien* was also used on the New Year's Eve. It was eaten to *ying sin*—"meet the new".⁴ In King chou fu, *mien* was eaten on the ninth day of the ninth month.⁵ *Mien* vermicelli was thus associated with chickens and thereby, by way of the *Wu hing* system, with the agent fire, which is also a *yang* symbol. The ninth day of the ninth month has at least some *yang* associations. A common name for this

² II: 51, 4a.

³ II: 51, 3b, 6a, 8a.

⁴ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b, 2a.

⁵ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2b.

✓ days is "Double yang". When *mien* was sent round in Ch'ang te fu in connection with the "To fight and cross over" ceremony, it seems to have been intended to stress the solidarity of the group which, as we have seen before, must have been associated with the *yang* principle. The paper with the picture of the dragon boat must have had the same function, since the dragon boat was associated with the own *tsu* group. In Yang Si ch'ang's account it is also said that the *t'ou*'s presents were paid for in money, food and wine in Ch'ang te fu, and it is also shown that these equivalent presents were used during the principal ceremony. Their function in that context will be discussed in Chapter VII.

✓ The man standing in the stern of the boat was called *shao*. This word means "rudder" or "stern". Yang Si ch'ang makes no mention of this person's tasks. It is plausible to assume that he managed a steering oar. Amidships were three more men. One of these was called *k'i*—"flag"—and his task was to guide the boat with flag signals. Another was called *ku*—"drum". He belaboured his instrument, and the crew paddled in time. This was the same as in An lu fu, where "To fight and cross over" was performed in "rhyme" with drums.⁶ The third man, *p'o pan*—"clapping boards"—also gave the rhythm for the paddles. Yang Si ch'ang states that in his days such clapping boards were used only in Ch'ang te fu. They had been replaced by gongs in other localities. This, Yang Si ch'ang says, was not correct, for gongs were not used formerly. The dragon boats often carried special singers, whose place was also midships. No definite numbers were fixed. They were four at the most, but might also be dispensed with completely.⁷

✓ To me it seems that these five special functionaries—the singers were not necessary—were associated with the five agents in the general Chinese *Wu hing* system. As will be shown later (Chapter VII), the boats were paddled from the north bank of the Yüan River to the south bank during the "To fight and cross over" ceremony. The *t'ou* stood facing south, and was most likely associated with fire. *Shao*, at the north end of the boat, was probably associated with water. *P'o pan*, with his wooden clapping boards, represented wood—it was wrong to use gongs, for they were made of metal—, while the drummer, *ku*, may have associated with metal, for such instruments were often made of bronze or brass. *K'i*, with his flags, should then have been associated with earth. Then the system would be as follows:

⁶ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

⁷ II: 51, 3b, 4a.

wood	fire	earth	metal	water
east	south	centre	west	north
<i>p'o pan</i>	<i>t'ou</i>	<i>k'i</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>shao</i>

Yang Sī ch'ang's account suggests that a *tsu* group employed a crew of experienced paddlers from families of fishermen accustomed to life on the river, not necessarily members of the *tsu* group. On the other hand, people who were unwilling to participate might be compelled ceremonially to do so, by emphasizing and actualizing the value of their agnatic ties of kinship. This contradiction may perhaps be understandable if it is assumed that members of the *tsu* group formed the majority of their boat's crew, and that the rest were experienced "water crows" hired to improve the prospects of the boat in the struggle. The special functionaries were most likely members of the *tsu* group. The social status of the *t'ou* is mentioned, for instance, and his other functions in connection with the dragon boat festival suggest that he belonged to the lineage. It is also said in *Wu ling king tu lüe* that all members of the crews were good swimmers, but not four of the five special functionaries—*t'ou*, *p'o pan*, *k'i* and *ku*—, who did not have to practise this art.⁸ They were evidently not very accustomed to life on the water; their qualifications for participation were on quite another level. The *shao* man, on the other hand, who must have been able to swim, i.e. been accustomed to life on the water, had certainly a difficult task, which must have required much experience. It is therefore difficult to say on the basis of the available evidence whether *shao* was a hired person or a member of the lineage.

⁸ II: 51, 6b.

V

The Wu Sorcerer

Among the persons ceremonially active in Ch'ang te fu during the dragon boat festival were sorcerers. Yang Sī ch'ang calls them wu yang. To find an especially potent sorcerer, some men went up into the mountains to invite what were called shan lao shī—"old masters in the mountains"—to whom they gave presents.

The night before the "To fight and cross over" ceremony was to be performed, the *t'ou* functionary gave the sorcerer sheng—"sacrificial animals"—and wine, and asked him to perform his arts. This was probably on the night prior to the tenth day of the month, since that was the first occasion on which the ceremony was performed. The wu sorcerer went from the stern of the dragon boat to the stern, scattering kin and tou measures of k'iao—"buckwheat". He also lighted a fire. This custom was called Liang ch'uan—"To illuminate the boat". Drums were beaten throughout the night. This, it was claimed, counteracted the influence of hostile sorcerers. On this occasion, the wu sorcerer supplied members of the crew with fu ch'uan—"lucky seals".

On the same day as "To fight and cross over" was performed, the wu sorcerer lighted an oil fire to start the dragon boat on its way. He foretold the outcome of the ceremony in the colour and height of the flames. High, red flames predicted victory for the boat, low, black ones defeat.

Yang Sī ch'ang has also recorded a tsu chou—"curse"—, which was no doubt declaimed by the sorcerer: "The fierce fire of the violent thunder burns the heavens." This phrase may perhaps be only the title of a longer text. The sorcerer also performed shu shou—"arts (gestures) with the hands"—called "To gather the going-before lung dragons", "To pacify the yin soldiers" and "To move the mountains and empty

the seas". The titles of others are not given. Barefooted and with trouser-legs rolled up, the sorcerer jumped seven steps and, reciting the following phrases, threw something into the fire. When it flamed up the dragon boat set out. The words recited were: "The fire of heaven is burning the sun. The fire of earth is burning the five regions. Lightning, master of the principles, is burning to death everything that is not auspicious. The dragon boat goes down the Jo water to the five lakes and the four seas and is permitted to float and to be propelled." Yang Sī ch'ang closes with an *et cetera* to indicate that the text is incomplete.

The outsides of the dragon boats were swept with *po mao* grass from stem to stern, to ensure that nothing had been attached to the boat by hostile persons. We are also told that the *wu* was associated with a certain *shen* spirit named Si ho Sa chen jen—"The Holy Sa of the Western River". Finally, Yang Sī ch'ang informs us that the rest of the sorcerer's doings were secret and meaningless, and that he knew nothing about them.¹

Yang Sī ch'ang associates this employment of a sorcerer with the introduction to the song *Chao hun* in the anthology *Ch'u ts'ī*, attributed to K'ü Yüan or his pupil, Sung Yü. A certain Wu Yang is mentioned there. It is this *wu* sorcerer, Yang, who performs the ceremony described in the song (cf. Chapter VII). It is obvious that Yang Sī ch'ang, by using the term *wu yang*, has endeavoured to associate "To fight and cross over" with *Ch'u t'si* and the K'ü Yüan tradition.

Other interesting items of information are available from the Hupeh—Hunan plain. *Wu* sorcerers evidently worked in this tract as curers of illnesses. This is reported from T'ao yüan hien,² where they were called *kuei wu*—"demon sorcerers", Yüe chou fu³ and Hing shan hien.⁴ In Ch'ang te fu itself, *wu shī*—"master sorcerers"—appeared in the New Year celebrations. They were dressed in red and had "demon faces", probably either masks or painted faces. They made a noise with gongs and drums and danced. Their performance was called *Huan no*—"To call back and drive away".⁵ On *She jī*, "The Day of the Earth God", in the second month, there were *wu hi* sorcerers in An lu fu. They

¹ II: 51, 6ab.

² VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2ab.

³ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 1b.

⁴ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 5b.

⁵ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a.

welcomed the *shen* spirits with songs and drums, and with "arms united" they stamped on the ground.⁶ One chronicler writes that a group of "water hands" (fishermen or the like) in Yün meng hien performed, on the fifth day of the fifth month, something called *Ying ch'uan*—"To welcome the boat". They were dressed in beautiful costumes and equipped with gongs, drums, pan-pipes, clapping boards, flags and pennants. They crossed the river and led the wandering *lung* dragons. The chronicler goes on to say: "Twenty strangers are arriving this day, and it is always so." The nature of these strangers was clearly purely imaginary, for the account continues: "The next day *sheng lao*—'sacrificial animals'—, wine, sweet wine, *küe shu* dumplings and fruits in season are brought and are *tsi* sacrificed on the ridges of the houses. For their veneration, tea, rice, paper money and real money are used in the granaries like parting presents." Later a procession walked along the river bank. Torches were made of reeds and lighted. This custom was ✓ called *Sung ch'uan*—"To escort the boat".⁷

In Ch'ang te fu, the *wu* sorcerer lighted a fire the night before "To fight and cross over". Torches were used in Yün meng hien when people "escorted the boat". The flames of the torches clearly acted as beacons, and it is not unlikely that the fire in Ch'ang te fu served a similar purpose. Some figures known as *no shen*—"drive away sprits"—appeared in Swei yang hien during the spring months. They performed a nocturnal play called *Huan hiang huo*—"To recall with incense and fire".⁸ The text does not explain what they recalled, but fire was evidently instrumental in the recalling, possibly as a beacon. In King chou fu at the *Siao nien*—"The Little Year"—celebrations, ✓ on the twenty-fourth day of the twelfth month, a fire was kept burning at night on the dikes between the fields. This custom was called *Chao t'ien ts'an*—"To illuminate fields and silkworms". No further information about the function of this fire is given by the chronicler.⁹ The name of the custom reminds one of *Liang ch'uan*—"To illuminate the boat". Some information is given about torches, but as usual little about their function. In Yi ling chou, on the seventh day of the seventh ✓ month, for example, torches called *ho teng*—"lotus lanterns"—were made of lotus leaves, *p'u* reeds and fat. They were fixed to the ends

⁶ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

⁷ II: 51, 19a.

⁸ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 5a.

⁹ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2b.

of bamboo poles and placed upright outside the doors of houses.¹⁰ On the fifteenth day of the first month torches made of reeds were placed at the south-western and south-eastern corners of houses in Sui yang hien.¹¹ It is also reported from Sui yang hien that "illuminated kettles and lanterns" were used when the kitchen spirit was sent on his annual journey to the heavens on the twenty-fourth day of the twelfth month to deliver his report. This was called *Sung tsao shen*—"To escort the kitchen spirit"—, a designation which seems to me also to imply that these sources of light then served as a kind of beacon.¹² There is similar information from An lu fu.¹³ Three of the reports mentioned above, like the account from Yün meng hien, may, I think be interpreted to mean that fire and sources of light served as ceremonial beacons.¹⁴

On the same day as the "To fight and cross over" ceremony took place in Ch'ang te fu, the *wu* sorcerer lighted an oil fire for purposes of divination. In the general Chinese conception of the world, fire was a symbol of the male and positive *yang* principle. Fire is also included as one the agents in the *Wu hing* system, and was associated in this connection with such conceptions as red, south, summer, heat, prosperity and happiness. Fire is a symbol of luck, which may explain why high red flames predicted success for a boat. In the same way, low black flames, which presaged bad luck, may have been associated with the dominance of the female, negative *yin*, since this principle was related to such conceptions as water, black, north, winter, cold and fear.

Drums were beaten in Ch'ang te fu to counteract the influence of hostile *wu* sorcerers. We are not told what these drums looked like, or if they had any function on other occasions. Drums are mentioned in *King Ch'u sui shi ki* in connection with the *La* festival on the eighth day of the twelfth month. According to this source, from the Liang period, drums were beaten in the villages on this day.¹⁵ There was a pond in Ch'ang te fu, at a school. A *siang ku*—"lucky drum"—was kept in the water. The sound of the drum meant seven days' luck.¹⁶

¹⁰ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 5a.

¹¹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4ab.

¹² VI: 1120, *Feng su* 5a.

¹³ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2b.

¹⁴ A notice originating from the *man* people in the mountains west of Ch'ang te fu is of interest in this connection. It is said that when a person died the water was illuminated; *K'i man ts'ung siao*, 11b.

¹⁵ *King Ch'u sui shi ki*, 16a.

¹⁶ VI: 1257, *Hüe hiao* 3b.

The master sorcerers, who appeared at New Year in the same locality, used, as mentioned above, gongs and drums. At a pond west of Siang yin hien, called Ta King t'ang, drums were played in cloudy and rainy weather. The drums were evidently "pots covered with a *shen mien*—"spirit face".¹⁷ A temple dedicated to Lung Wang—"the Dragon King"—stood on a mountain, Yin shan, 100 *li* west of Siang t'an hien. In connection with this temple it is said that in drought years, one *ying k'ü*—"welcomes and causes to go away"—and in doing so drums were beaten and songs sung.¹⁸ A report from the Yüé chou fu region says that people met at harvest to recite *tao* prayers in the *ts'í* hall, that is, in the ancestral hall, and to beat drums. Drums were played at the same locality during the vigil of the New Year's night. It is said: "Drums are beaten and wind instruments played."¹⁹ The *Li ch'un* day—"The Establishment of Spring"—, approximately the fifth of February, was celebrated in King chou fu with, among other events, a tug-of-war accompanied by drums. From the festival period at the beginning of the fifth month (the fifth or thirteenth day) there was, in King chou fu, drum music to "guide *shen* spirits who wander about".²⁰ In Kung an hien the women transplanted the rice while men beat the working rhythm on drums.²¹ At the feast of *Shang yüan*, held in Han ch'uan hien in the middle of the first month, a "guidance" was performed by means of a procession with gongs and drums. Another "guidance" was arranged at the *Li ch'un* festival, when it was said that "A guidance is made by means of farmers' implements and big drums".²² From An lu fu it is reported that "at a death, drums and songs are blended with lamentation". At the same place, five drums were beaten on New Year's day, and in connection with *Li ch'un* it is said that "the farmers are beating drums and ploughing". Drums and music played on wind instruments were also part of the feast of *Yüan siao* in the middle of the first month. It has been mentioned earlier that *wu hi* sorcerers performed in An lu fu on *She jī* in the second month. They welcomed the *shen* spirits with songs and drums.²³ Pan-pipes and drums were played in

¹⁷ VI: 1204, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 9b.

¹⁸ VI: 1210, *Ts'í miao* 1, 9b.

¹⁹ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 1b, 2b.

²⁰ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

²¹ VI: 1193, *Feng su*, 3a.

²² VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

²³ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 1b, 2a.

King shan hien at the festival in the middle of the first month.²⁴ In Sui yang hien there was a custom on New Year's day called Nao nien—"To make a noise for the year". Children were let loose with bamboo crackers, gongs and drums. Drums were also played the previous night: "In the still of the night, *si* sacrifices are made to ancestors . . . The sound of drums, and fire-crackers give reverence."²⁵ At the "To welcome the boat" ceremony in Yün meng hien, mentioned above, the drum was one of the instruments used in the procession.

From this material it is evident that the drum was an important instrument in ceremonial contexts on the Hupeh—Hunan plain. Three of the reports show that drums, or rather the sound of drums, had a "guiding" function. In one of them it is stated explicitly that *shen* spirits were guided by the sound of drums. Another tells that the *shen* spirits were "welcomed" with songs and the sound of drums. This "welcoming" probably meant the same thing as "guiding" them by the help of the sound of drums. The other two accounts, in which "welcoming" is mentioned, seem to have the same implications, and it is probable that the music of drums may be regarded as "guiding" in these cases, too. Three of the notices mentioned above associated drums directly with death and dead ancestors. It seems plausible, therefore, to assume that the *shen* spirits guided, according to two of the accounts, were actually dead ancestors.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there was, among other functionaries, a drummer on the dragon boat at Ch'ang te fu during the "To fight and cross over" ceremony with the task of beating the rhythm for the paddles. The situation was clearly the same in An lu fu, where the fighting and crossing over was performed in "rhyme" with drums.²⁶ The use of drums on the boats was most likely associated with the *Wu hing* system, and it is not impossible that such associations were present in other ceremonial connections, in which these instruments were used. Thus it seems possible that the whole procession in Yün meng hien, which crossed over the water to "welcome" the boat, referred to the *Wu hing* categories. The people taking part may be compared with and included in the symbolic classification of the special functionaries on the dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu, given in the previous chapter.

²⁴ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

²⁵ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4a, 5b.

²⁶ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

	wood	fire	earth	metal	water
	east	south	centre	west	north
Ch'ang te fu	<i>p'o pan</i>	<i>t'ou</i>	<i>k'i</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>shao</i>
	clapping boards		flag	drum	
Yün meng hien	clapping boards	pan-pipes?	flag	drum	gong?

The positions of the pan-pipes and the gong are tentative. In any case, the example seems to indicate that associations with the five agents in connection with such processions are quite possible.

The association of drums with metal and west fits in structurally with the fact that they were also explicitly associated with the dead, since the metal category in its turn was related to the negative *yin* principle, with its relationship to death and darkness.

There is a possibility that the *wu* sorcerer employed in Ch'ang te fu was not *Han* Chinese. He was fetched, as mentioned earlier, preferably from the mountains and was called "old master from the mountains". It is plausible to presume that such a *wu* came from some non-Chinese *man* people. It should be observed in this connection that bronze drums played an important role among the *man* people in the mountain regions along the valley of the Yüan River west of Ch'ang te fu. In these regions, the instruments were used to rally people in case of attack, when victories were celebrated and at council meetings. Special drum festivals were also held, and drums were beaten incessantly during death feasts.²⁷ It is interesting to observe that the combination fire—drum-music, which belonged to the death customs of the *man* people,²⁸ was also found in conjunction with the activities of the *wu* sorcerers the night before the "To fight and cross over" ceremony was performed. But no definite conclusions can be drawn from this.

Of the phrases read by the *wu* sorcerers in Ch'ang te fu, it seems as if the *tsu chou* curse and the beginning of the text read in conjunction with the divination by oil fire had averting and driving away implications. What they drove away was evidently something causing bad luck or the bad luck itself, but its nature is not clear. Yang Sī ch'ang's account speaks of the "influence of hostile sorcerers" and of "hostile

²⁷ These bronze drums are described as follows: "They have rings of armed men. They are empty in the middle and have no bottoms." They were kept in caves by rivers or "hidden in the midst of the water of the river". *K'i man ts'ung siao*, 3b, 5a, 6b.

²⁸ See note 14.

persons". These were very likely associated with rival dragon boats and thereby with other *tsu* groups. This influence of other lineages will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter VII.

Two of the gestures mentioned by name, "To gather the going-before *lung* dragons" and "To pacify the *yin* soldiers", will also be discussed in Chapter VII. The third, "To move the mountains and empty the seas", is more difficult to analyse or fit into any context. Mountains and seas seem to be antitheses here, and it is very likely that we are concerned with the general Chinese conception that direction upwards (mountain) is *yang* and direction downwards (sea) is *yin*.²⁹ The name of this gesture seems to express something associated with these two categories, but what it was is wrapped in obscurity.

When the *wu* sorcerer in Ch'ang te fu had lighted the oil fire, the dragon boat was paddled into the river. At the same time the sorcerer recited: "The dragon boat goes down the Jo water to the five lakes and four seas, and is permitted to float and to be propelled." According to the general Chinese conception of the world, Jo shuei—"Weak Water"—is a cosmic river. In the Han work, *Shan hai king*, it is said, for example, that the source of the Jo water is at the foot of the Jo tree, that is, the tree of the sunset.³⁰ This idea seems to have been generally accepted. Thus it seems that the starting of the dragon boat was a symbolic representation of the voyage of the dragon boat down the cosmic Jo water from the regions of the setting sun to the world of man.

According to the account from Yün meng hien, "twenty strangers",³¹ that is, imaginary beings to whom *tsi* sacrifices were made, arrived on the fifth of the fifth month. It has earlier been found plausible to assume that fire and drum music were used for guidance. It was also considered probable that the *shen* spirits guided by the sound of the drums—and no doubt by the light of the fires—were dead ancestors.

²⁹ The following story is evidence that mountains were associated with the male *yang* principle. A woman who offered *tao* prayers on the mountain Po mien shan at Kia yü hien conceived and bore three sons. Conception seems to have been due to the male *yang* influence of the mountain; VI: 1116, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a. Ascending mountains and hills on the ninth day of the ninth month, a feast called *Ch'ung yang*—"Double *yang*"—in Ch'ang te fu, for example may have had the same implications; VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a.

³⁰ Granet 1959, 371; for the dating of *Shan hai king*, see Karlgren 1946, 204 f.

³¹ The basic meaning of the word *wai*, here translated "stranger", is "outside, abroad, exclude". Here the translations "person from abroad" and "person on the outside" would perhaps be more exact.

✓ The *wu* sorcerer in Ch'ang te fu thus seems to have guided dead ancestors in connection with the starting of the dragon boat prior to the first performance of the "To fight and cross over" ceremony. Since a dragon boat was identified with a certain *tsu* group, the dead ancestors were undoubtedly those of members of the group. The connection between the dragon boats and the ancestors of the *tsu* group is also obvious. They were guided in ceremonies associated with the dragon boat. In Yün meng hien the boat was "welcomed" and it was said that "twenty strangers", most probably dead ancestors, arrived, evidently with the boat that was welcomed. A report from King chou fu states expressly that the "*shen* spirits fight and cross over".³² Yang Sī ch'ang ✓ says that the music of the drums counteracted "hostile influence", which was another function attributed to it. The ambiguous symbolic value of the sound of drums might be interpreted to mean that the guiding function implied the expulsion of influences that might hinder this guidance. Hostile influence might also be counteracted by the help of ✓ *po mao* grass (*Imperata arundunacea*). I have not been able to find any other information from the Hupeh-Hunan plain on ceremonial uses of this grass.

On the basis of the above, the following picture of the activities of the *wu* sorcerer in conjunction with the "To fight and cross over" ceremony in Ch'ang te fu might be drawn. Drums were beaten during the previous night, and the *wu* lighted a fire and "illuminated the boat" ✓ to guide the dragon boat's crew of dead ancestors. The *wu* sorcerer, who had been supplied with meat and wine, probably made presents of welcome, or a kind of sacrifice to the ancestors. He also gave them buckwheat, and obviously distributed it by walking along the boat from stem to stern scattering the grain. He gave each member of the actual ✓ crew a "lucky seal", probably an instrument to ensure the success of the boat in the great ceremony. The *wu* sorcerer also endeavoured to foretell the success of the boat by divination. He performed gestures, which were concerned with *lung* dragons, "*yin* soldiers" and the *yin* and *yang* principles. The ceremony concerned with the starting of the dragon boat also told about the arrival of the ancestors and their voyage on the Jo water from the regions of the sunset. The flames rose high, and the dragon boat set out on the river. It had then arrived in the world of living men, and was ready to participate in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony.

³² VI: 1194, *Ts'i miao* 2, 1a.

VI

The Dragon Boats

We have seen earlier that the dragon boats, *lung ch'uan* or *lung chou*, were identified with different *tsu* groups. Yang Sī ch'ang, in his essay *Wu ling king tu lüe*, mentions six dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu. They were equipped with dragon heads, scales and tails, and were painted in different colours. The largest were eleven *chang* and five *ch'i* long, that is, in the region of 40 metres (about 130 feet). Each boat had its own *miao shen*—"temple spirit"—, carried different flags, and had special uniforms for the functionaries.¹ There were also smaller dragon boats; they do not seem to have taken part in the ceremonial struggle, but kept at a respectful distance from the large fighting boats.

One of the fighting boats in Ch'ang te fu was called *Hua ch'uan*—"The Multi-coloured Boat". It was painted in five colours. The text does not say what these colours were, but a combination of five colours in China is nearly always made up of the colours of the five agents: green, red, yellow, white and black. The multi-coloured boat carried two white flags, on which were five-coloured *lung* dragon figures. The five special functionaries were dressed in white and yellow. The *miao shen* of the boat was called Liang Wang. He was depicted wearing the costume of an official and a *mien* crown. Yang Sī ch'ang says that he was Liang Sung, a general during the Eastern Han dynasty who, in A. D. 49, took over command of a military campaign in the neighbourhood of the Yüan River from the famous Ma Yüan. The people living on Yang shan, a mountain 30 *li* north of Ch'ang te fu, made *sī* sacrifices to this Liang Sung. Yang Sī ch'ang also quotes a poem by the T'ang poet Liu Yü si in which it is said that Liang Sung received *hüe shī*—

¹ II: 51, 3 b, 6 b, 7 ab.

“blood food”—on this mountain. Yang Sī ch’ang’s statement can be complemented here by a notice in a local chronicle which says that there was a *miao* temple on the top of Yang shan in which *sī* sacrifices were made to the *shen* spirit of the mountain. It is also said that during the T’ang period *hiang* sacrifices were made to Liang Sung, and that the mountain was named Liang shan to honour him.² This tradition of identifying Yang shan’s *shen* spirit with General Liang Sung was clearly still alive during late Ming times. South of the Yüan River, not far from Ch’ang te fu, there was a *miao* temple dedicated to Liang Wang, where people offered *k’i* prayers for children on three occasions, at *T’a ts’ing*—“Tread on the green”—, that is the *Ts’ing ming* festival in the third month, when peaches and plums were ripe and when chrysanthemums were in flower. When the multi-coloured boat was paddled on the river ceremonies were performed in this temple. The dragon head of the boat was carved in the likeness of the temple *shen*.

There was still another five-coloured boat among the dragon boats participating in the ceremony at Ch’ang te fu. It was called *Sai hua ch’uan*—“The Rival Multi-coloured Boat”. The two multi-coloured boats represented different regions. The *miao shen* of this rival multi-coloured boat was not the same as that of the first one, although they were similar in appearance. The *miao shen* of “The Rival Multi-coloured Boat” was called Ling Kuan. In the general Chinese hierarchy of “immortal” figures Ling Kuan holds the post of doorkeeper in the palace of Yü huang—“the Jade Ruler”; armed with a cudgel he expels evil spirits.³ This boat was connected with a region called Yü kia kang—“The Harbour of the Yü Families”. This may mean that it was identified with a *tsu* bearing the family name of Yü. The possibility that *yü* may simply mean “fisherman” has already been mentioned.

A third boat was painted purple. The figures on its flags were the same colour, and the special functionaries on the boat were dressed in white and yellow. This boat’s *miao shen* was called General Li Ts’ai. Yang Sī ch’ang says that he carried a red club in his hand as a sign of his authority to control boats on lakes and rivers, and that his origins were unknown.

The white boat was painted pure white, and the flags and uniforms were also pure white. This boat had three *miao shen*. They were called Lao Kuan, Yang t’ou San lang and Chu ma San lang. They were

² VI: 1255, *Shan ch’uan* 1, 1b.

³ Maspero 1950, 118.

depicted holding a paddle in one hand, while the other was either clenched or playing with a multi-coloured ball. Yang Sī ch'ang says, clearly with reference to Chu ma San lang: "Formerly there was a *shen* called Chu lang. It is not known whether this was he or not."

One boat was painted black. The flags on this boat were red and the uniforms green. Not only the special functionaries, but also the crew wore green uniforms.⁴ The black boat had three *miao shen*, too, who were called Huang kung Ta po, (Huang kung) Er po, and (Huang kung) San po. It was said that they had been brothers, all indigo merchants, and that they had drowned and become *shen* spirits. They were depicted with black faces, and each holding a paddle in one hand. The sixth dragon boat was red. Its flags and uniforms were the same as those of the black boat. The paddlers of the red boat wore uniforms too, in which it and the black boat differed from the other boats. A *tsu* group with the family name Su probably belonged to one of the last-named boats; Yang Sī ch'ang's text does not make clear which of the two it was. The name of a village, Su kia tu—"The Ferry of the Su Families"—was associated with one of these boats.

Yang Sī ch'ang mentions that there had earlier been a green boat, called *Ts'ing chu piao*—"The Green Bamboo Branch". It had belonged to *Ts'ing p'ing men*, the region by the west gate of the town, which was associated with the multi-coloured boat in Yang Sī ch'ang's time. Yang Sī ch'ang did not know when the use of the green boat was discontinued, but he says that a small temple dedicated to its *miao shen* was still in existence.

A yellow boat is also mentioned, but for a special reason no such boat was in use. A yellow dragon boat had once been built with head, horns, scales, claws and body like a real *lung* dragon. When it was launched and the crew began to paddle it, it sank with a hundred men on board. The reason for this was said to have been that the boat was too much like a genuine *lung* dragon. The dragon's head was not used in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony in Yang Sī ch'ang's time, but was mounted on the boat for a short time only. Another reason given for the sinking of the yellow dragon boat was that the paddles were from Lung tsing—"The Dragon Spring"—on Mount Te shan, by the Yüan River, immediately south of the town of Ch'ang te fu. According to information provided by a local chronicle, there really was a dragon spring on the

⁴ *Ts'ing*, translated "green" in this work, may possibly mean "dark" implying "black". Chao Wei-pang (1943, 15) prefers the latter.

top of Te shan. But this was called Po lung tsing—"The White Dragon's Spring"—and in the water, which was connected with a reservoir at the foot of the mountain, lived "a white dragon, which, writhing, hides in its interior".⁵

Two of the boats taking part in the ceremony in Ch'ang te fu were painted in five colours. It has already been pointed out that the expression "five colours" nearly always referred to the five colours of the five agents. The colours were associated with the agents and the five points of the compass as follows:

wood	fire	earth	metal	water
east	south	centre	west	north
green ,	red ,	yellow ,	white .	black. ,

The combination of the five colours to form a compound symbol, as in the case of the two multi-coloured boats, is also found in other connections on the Hupeh-Hunan plain. The dragon boats were clearly concerned in some way with *lung* dragons, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Another example of *lung* dragons being associated with combinations of five colours originates from Yün meng hien. At the *Tuan wu* festival, *han lung*—"dry weather dragons"—were made of bamboo and thin, five-coloured silk laid in layers, like scales. These dragons were placed on the roofs of towers and high pavilions.⁶ Their name suggests that they served in some way to avert drought and to produce rain, which was normal and desirable at this time of the year. The *lung* dragon is generally associated with rain in China. At Shan hua hien was a spring called Lou shuei or, by a more popular name Lao lung t'an—"The Old Dragon's Pond". Close by was a *ts'i* hall, associated with Luang Wang—"The Dragon King"—and if *tao* prayers were offered there much rain would fall. It is also said that five-coloured soil was found in the vicinity.⁷

An account dating from the Liang period says that five-coloured ribbons of silk were worn on the arm on the fifth day of the fifth month in the King Ch'u region. They were called *p'i ping*—"drive away soldiers"—and they prevented people taking ill.⁸ A local chronicler says that the children in Han ch'uan hien wear five-coloured threads round

⁵ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a.

⁶ II: 51, 19a.

⁷ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 4b.

⁸ *King Ch'u suei shi ki*, 12a.

their arms at *Tuan wu*.⁹ On the *Wu* day in An lu fu, too, the sons used threads and other things. It is said: "Five colours are bound together and *ming lü*—'threads of life'—are united." Together with other articles they were intended to avert negative influence.¹⁰ In T'ung shan hien, boys and girls wore five-coloured threads round their left wrists in the fifth month. They were called *pi kuei suei*—"avert demon calamities"—there.¹¹ As will be seen in the following, a kind of dumpling, equipped with five-coloured threads, was used in conjunction with "To fight and cross over". One story concerning these dumplings says that the threads provided protection against malicious *kiao lung* dragons. In this connection it is worthy of note that on the eighteenth day of the fifth month a procession passed through the streets of Wu ch'ang hien, with the purpose of banishing diseases. Those taking part wore "five-coloured ornaments" in their hair.¹²

At the feast of *Shang yüan* in the middle of the first month, a common custom in the whole region was the use of paper lanterns. In Ch'ang te fu these lanterns were decorated in five colours.¹³ The same was done in Yüe chou fu,¹⁴ Han ch'uan hien¹⁵ and Ying shan hien, in which place the lanterns were sewn with five-coloured threads.¹⁶ At the New Year celebrations in An lu fu, five-coloured paper money was hung up by the doors.¹⁷ This was also done in King shan hien¹⁸ and Suei yang hien.¹⁹ Nothing is said in any of these cases about the implications of the combination of five colours.

The above shows that the combination of five colours was found in contexts concerned with production, and in situations where negative influence was to be driven away. The same symbol could evidently give rise to different associations in different situations. I think that this may be explained on the basis of the general Chinese theory of agents, and the speculations around them. It has been shown above that the five

⁹ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

¹⁰ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

¹¹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6b.

¹² VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

¹³ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

¹⁴ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2a.

¹⁵ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

¹⁶ VI: 1166, *Feng su* 4a.

¹⁷ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2b.

¹⁸ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

¹⁹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 5a.

colours refer to the five agents—*Wu hing*. These five agents are related to each other in a certain way. It is generally accepted that they supersede each other according to a certain system; one agent gives rise to another, which in its turn gives rise to a third, and so on in a cyclic system. Wood produces fire, fire earth, earth metal, metal water, and water wood. To me it seems plausible to assume that the combination of five colours in ceremonial situations told about this productive cycle, and was a symbol of productive power. The five agents could be arranged in another way, in the order in which they destroyed each other. Thus fire is destroyed by water, water by earth, earth by wood, wood by metal and metal by fire. In analogy with the above, I think it probable that the combination of five colours could also tell about this destructive cycle, and be a symbol of destructive power.) In the case of the dry-weather dragons in Yün meng hien, the symbolic associations with the productive power seem to have been stressed, without the destructive power being completely ignored. The contrary probably prevailed with reference to the five-coloured threads. The averting and destructive powers, which banished negative influences, were emphasized at the same time as the associations with the productive powers were not necessarily excluded. This gives, I think, a plausible explanation of the apparent ambiguity of the five-colour symbols.

To me it seems likely that the colours of the boats were, in general, related to the *Wu hing* system. Yellow was not used in connection with the dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu. The story of the yellow dragon boat built there, which sank because it had too great a likeness to a real *lung* dragon, is obviously the verbal expression of this lacuna in the ceremonial structure. The use of green had been discontinued in the time of Yang Sī ch'ang, and must, therefore, have been used earlier. The green boat may have been replaced by one of the multi-coloured boats. One of the boats was purple, but purple had no place in the *Wu hing* system, which seems to contradict my assumption. Yang Sī ch'ang's account shows frequently that rules of ceremony were not always strictly observed in late Ming times, and that many items had disappeared. The presence of a purple boat might, I think, be attributed to these changes. The allusions to the *Wu hing* colour symbolism remained then, but were perhaps not so strict; there was scope for other associations and valuations, too, and a purple boat was no longer out of place. A summary of the colour symbolism in connection with the dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu would then be as follows:

wood	fire	earth	metal	water	
green	red	yellow	white	black	
green boat	red boat	(yellow boat)	white boat	black boat	purple boat

Multi-coloured boat, Rival multi-coloured boat.

Another reason for the sinking of the yellow boat, mentioned in the account, should be observed. It was said that paddles from Lung tsing were used, and that this circumstance was a contributory cause of the boat's fate. This "dragon spring" proved to be associated with a white dragon, and thereby with metal. It may be that the loss of the yellow boat was attributed to the fact that the category of the paddles was not in harmony with the earth category of the boat.

Two flags were displayed in the middle of the boat. It is not clear from the text whether they were the flags used by one of the special functionaries or others. Yang Sī ch'ang says that the flags were things to welcome the *shen* spirits. To justify this to his literary public he quotes *Shao sī ming* from the anthology *Ch'u ts'ī*, and Han Yü's poem *Lo chī miao pei*, in which he finds similar statements. These comparisons, naturally, provide no further evidence, nor do they give reasons to doubt the account from Ch'ang te fu, which is in good agreement with the assumption made above that the dead ancestors of the *tsu* group came in the dragon boats. In An lu fu on the feast of *Han shi*—"Cold Food"—in the third month, paper pennants were placed on the graves of forefathers.²⁰ This custom suggests some kind of relationship between the dead ancestors and the pennants. At the "welcoming of the boat" in Yün meng hien, already mentioned, flags and pennants were also used to guide the wandering *lung* dragons.²¹ They were clearly used as landmarks in this case.

It should be observed that three of the boats had figures on the flags in the same colour or colours as the boats themselves. The flags of the two multi-coloured boats were adorned with pictures of five-coloured *lung* dragons, which reminds one of the custom in Yün meng hien, of "guiding wandering *lung*" with flags and the like, and of the dry-weather dragons at the same locality. The flags were perhaps landmarks for both *shen* spirits and *lung* dragons. The flags on the purple boat were embellished with purple "drawings" but we are not told

²⁰ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

²¹ II: 51, 19a.

what they represented. The allusion may mean that in this case, too, the drawings were of dragons. The flags of the red and white boats were the same colours as the boats. The five dragon boats mentioned hitherto had thus symbols of the same colours as the boats themselves. In this respect the black differed from the others, for it had red flags. The reason for this is not known.

There are also other details that are difficult to explain. For example, I find it difficult to recognize any significance in the colours of the uniforms, and to relate them meaningfully to the *Wu hing* system of colour symbolism. The functionaries of the two five-coloured boats and the purple one wore yellow and white costumes, while those of the red and black boats wore green ones. Only the white boat's functionaries had uniforms the same colour as the boat and its flags. Further, the crews of the boats wore *fu ch'uan*—"lucky seals"—on their heads. These must have been the *fu ch'uan* presented to them by the *wu* sorcerer (see Chapter V). Small yellow and red flags were stuck in their hair at the temples, together with feathers from the egret, *lu sī*. Yang Sī ch'ang says "they are things that avert and defeat".²² I have not been able to find any information to elucidate this claim. It has been shown earlier that flags might act as ceremonial landmarks, but it is difficult to reconcile this function with the above statement. These small flags were red and yellow, two colours that should have been associated with fire and earth in the *Wu hing* system. As already mentioned, these agents are related to each other, in that fire produces earth. To identify the flags with symbols of productivity does not fit in with the above statement either. But the double function attributed to drum music should be borne in mind in this connection. We saw in Chapter V that the sound of drums was clearly intended to guide *shen* spirits and to avert hostile influence. The flags as symbols may possibly have had a similar double function. In any case it should be borne in mind that these seals were clearly "lucky" and "averted and defeated" at the same time. The seal as a complex symbol obviously had a double meaning. The egret feathers were probably the breeding plumes of these birds. It has been impossible for me to find any information explaining their function, or their value as symbols.

The *miao shen*, or "temple spirits", of the boats have some interesting features. Liang Wang, who belonged to "The Multicoloured Boat", was

²² II: 51, 6b.

identified with the great Han general, Liang Sung. We have already seen that this general assumed command of a military expedition in the region of the Yüan River in the year A. D. 49. This campaign was opened to subjugate the warlike *man* peoples who were numerous in these tracts. In the light of this historical event, the Liang Sung symbol should have been associated with subjugating and repulsing powers. At the same time, it was also associated with productive power, for it said that *k'i* prayers were read in his temple to obtain children. The double function of the Liang Sung symbol will be recognized from the earlier discussion. It was present in the five-colour symbol, and the association of Liang Sung with the five-coloured "Multi-coloured Boat", whose dragon head was actually a representation of Liang Sung is in structural agreement with the above conclusion. "The Rival Multi-coloured Boat" had a *miao shen* called Ling Kuan, who must have been attributed with the ability to avert and drive away. We have already seen that Ling Kuan, in the general Chinese hierarchy of immortals, holds the post of doorkeeper in the palace of the Jade Ruler, where, armed with a cudgel, he drives away evil spirits. Ling Kuan's weapon is found in the representation of the *miao shen* of the purple dragon boat, Li Ts'ai, who was represented with a red club in his hand. This club, which was a sign of Li Ts'ai's authority to control boats on lakes and rivers, must, in analogy with Ling Kuan's task, be regarded as an instrument with which he drove away some kind of negative influence. It was painted red, the colour of the fire agent and the *yang* principle. His title, *kün tsiang*—"General"—, may also, in analogy with Liang Sung, indicate that he was considered as a subjugator and driver away of hostile influences.

The white boat had three *miao shen*—Lao Kuan, Yang t'ou and Chu ma San lang. Yang Sī ch'ang says in his essay: "There was formerly a *shen* named Chu lang. It is not known whether it was this one or not." This must refer to Chu ma San lang. Chao Wei pang, in his comments on *Wu ling king tu lüe*, has quoted a story about Chu lang. It is taken from a text dating from the Tsin period (A. D. 265 — A. D. 419), *Hua yang kou chī*. This work describes conditions in Szechuan,²³ but it is possible that there may be similar stories from the Hupeh-Hunan plain. The above statement by Yang Sī ch'ang suggests that this is so. This is the story according to Chao Wei pang. "The legend

²³ *Ts'ī hai, Hua yang kuo chī*.

of Chu Lang is as follows: 'In the old times a woman washed clothes by a stream. A bamboo of three joints floated to her feet and did not go away. She broke it and found a child. The child in later days became the chief of some tribe and after death he was worshipped as a god under the name of Chu Wang'." It was this Chu Wang, or possibly his son, to whom Yang Sī ch'ang referred.²⁴ Yang Sī ch'ang himself is rather uncertain regarding this identification, however; and the story of Chu lang does not give much further information in this context. The three *miao shen* of the white boat were represented with a paddle in one hand and the other clenched or playing with a multi-coloured ball. The paddle is reminiscent of Ling Kuan and Li Ts'ai, both of whom were represented with clubs. I assume that in this case the paddle served as a club and driving-away instrument, as well as the clenched fist and the multi-coloured—no doubt five-coloured—ball, which was probably associated with destructive power.

The three *miao shen* of the black boat were brothers; Huang kung big brother, Huang kung second brother and Huang kung third brother. Their faces were as black as the dragon boat. These brothers also had paddles as weapons. They were said to have been indigo merchants, but they were drowned and became *shen* spirits. This story reminds us of a similar story from a place ten *li* west of King ling hien. It referred to the shore of a river, called *Chen chu p'o*—"The Shore of the True Pearls". It was said that pearls could be found there. Tradition has it that merchants dealing in pearls travelled on the river. One day their boat capsized at this spot, and they were drowned. After that, *ling yi*—"spirits and strangeness"—appeared on one side of the river. The people living there erected a *ts'i* hall in honour of these pearl merchants. One name given to this hall was *Fu chou kang*—"Capsize Boat Mound".²⁵ In the general Chinese conception of the world, the pearl is usually a symbol of the *yin* principle. Water is also classified as belonging to *yin*. Thus the tale of the pearl merchants is based on the association pearl—(drowning in) water—*yin*. To my mind, a similar structure can be traced in the story of the three *miao shen* of the black dragon boat. Their faces were black, they were indigo merchants and they drowned and became *shen*. The deep blue colour of indigo was probably classified as black. If so, indigo would be regarded as belonging to the *yin* principle, which is associated with black but also with water.

²⁴ Chao Wei-pang 1943, 15.

²⁵ VI: 1144, *Ku ts'i* 2, 2b.

Thus the tale of the three brothers seems to express the connection black dragon boat—black—indigo—(drowning in) water—*yin*.

Yang Sī ch'ang treats of the black and red boats together in his essay. From the text it seems that the red dragon boat and the black one had the same *miao shen*. This does not fit well into the structure found earlier. By their black faces, trade in indigo and death by drowning, these three *miao shen* were related to the *yin* principle. The colour of the red boat must have been classified as belonging to the *yang* principle and the agent fire. This contradiction is difficult to explain and must be due to circumstances which cannot be analyzed at present.

That, or perhaps those, *miao shen* belonging to the green boat found earlier, which still had a small temple, is not described.

A retrospective glance at this discussion of the *miao shen* attached to the different boats in Ch'ang te fu reveals that these figures have one feature in common; they were all drivers-away, subjugators, and were attributed with destructive ability.

An important problem is which associations were connected with the boat *motif*. The theory has been advanced above that the dragon boats were vessels carrying dead ancestors and that, in that capacity, they were associated with different lineages. It must also be observed that miniature dragon boats were made. Yang Sī ch'ang says that such boats were made of paper in Ch'ang te fu. They were the same colour as the "real" dragon boat to which the makers of the paper boats belonged. These paper boats were burnt on the banks of the river. The purpose of this custom was to cure illnesses.²⁶ A local chronicle from Ch'ang te fu says that boats were made on the fifth day of the fifth month, at a place outside the east gate of the town, associated with K'ü Yüan. The boats were loaded with *küe shu*, a kind of dumpling, and allowed to float down the river. These boats were probably such miniature dragon boats.²⁷ Some data from the Hupeh-Hunan plain are of interest. In the region around Yüe chou fu, at the great festival in the fifth month "in the villages' market places", boats were made of reeds, in the shape of *lung* dragons, with sails, masts, punting poles and oars. They were regarded as *jang*—"sacrifices"—to prevent calamities. Another account says that during the *Tuan wu* festival in Yüe chou fu, *ts'ao ch'uan*—"grass boats"—were launched.

²⁶ II: 51, 5b.

²⁷ VI: 1260, *Ku tsi* 2a.

This was called *Sung wen*—"To escort diseases".²⁸ On the eighteenth day of the first month, paper boats and other things were made in Kien li hien. The boats were burnt, together with other things made of paper, on the shores of the river. These, too, were *jang* to avert calamities.²⁹ Paper dragon boats were made "in streets and market places" in An lu fu on the fifth day of the fifth month. They were *tsiao* sacrifices, and their purpose was to *k'ü yi*—"drive away diseases".³⁰ On the seventeenth day of the fifth month, a *mao ch'uan*—"water-mallow boat"—was drawn through the streets of Wu ch'ang hien. This custom was called *chu yi*—"to drive away diseases".³¹ In Ta ye hien the eighteenth of the same month was called *Sung wen ji*—"To escort diseases day". A dragon boat (or perhaps several) was made of paper. Above was a picture of San lu ta fu, that is, K'ü Yüan and ten other "figures and things". These figures were dressed in multi-coloured costumes and painted caps and girdles. The boat was filled with silver and pewter. It was "escorted" to Ts'ing lung t'i—"The Green Dragon's Pond"—and burnt. This custom was considered to be "impoverishing", and other places in the region had less expensive versions. It is reported that *mao ch'uan*—"grass boats"—were made.³² A notice from Te an fu says that "a dragon boat is made" on the *Wu* day.³³ A dragon boat of paper and bamboo was made on *Tuan wu* in the villages around Ying shan hien.³⁴ *Shen chou*—"spirit boats"—were made in Huang chou fu on the *Wu* day. Some were made of bamboo sticks and paper, others of wood. *Shen kuei hing chuang*—"spirit figures"—were tied to them. They were also adorned with multi-coloured silk, and were clearly used in some kind of procession. It is said that people *ying shen*—"welcomed spirits"—in the streets. The boats were used again on the eighteenth day of the fifth month. The paper boats were then burnt in the fields and the wooden ones set adrift down the river. This custom was called *Sung wen*—"To escort diseases".³⁵

The words "dragon boat" are found as elements in some place-

²⁸ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2ab. II: 51, 19b.

²⁹ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 4a.

³⁰ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

³¹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

³² VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6a.

³³ II: 51, 18b.

³⁴ II: 51, 19a.

³⁵ VI: 1178, *Feng su* 1b.

names in the region. Near Li ling hien was something called Lung ch'uan t'ou—"Dragon Boat's Head". It was most likely a cliff or the like.³⁶ A narrow stream called Si jang k'i, in the prefecture of King chou fu, was also named Luang ch'uan ho—"Dragon Boat River".³⁷ In Han yang fu was a dam called Lung ch'uan pi—"Dragon Boat Dam".³⁸

Other pieces of information are more interesting. In the eastern part of the town of Ch'ang te fu was a small lake with the name Tung hu—"the East Lake". It is said that "by the shore is a T'ie ch'uan miao—"Iron Boat Temple"."³⁹ In the neighbourhood of Lin Siang hien there was a pond called T'ie ch'uan t'an—"Iron Boat Pond". A local chronicler says that, according to tradition, *shen jen*—"spirit persons"—were carried there in an iron boat.⁴⁰

A possible starting-point for an endeavour to explain the boat symbol seems to be the material these ceremonial and mythical boats were made of. It should be possible to group these different materials together, in order to see whether they have any common associations. The following materials have been mentioned: paper, bamboo, wood, *wei* reeds, *ts'ao* grass, water-mallow, *mao* grass, iron. An attempt will be made to explain the meaning of these materials.

In Han ch'ua hien, something called *shen ch'i*—"spirit paper"—was used at New Year celebrations.⁴¹ *Ch'u fu*—"sheets of paper"—were burnt on the burial grounds of T'ung shan hien at the beginning of the tenth month.⁴² Paper pennants were placed on graves in An lu fu at the *Han shi* festival in the third month.⁴³ Ceremonial money was often made of paper.⁴⁴ Paper money was hung over graves in Ch'ang te fu at the *Ts'ing ming* celebrations.⁴⁵ The same custom was observed in King shan hien,⁴⁶ Wu ch'ang hien⁴⁷ and Sui yang

³⁶ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 5b.

³⁷ VI: 1200, *Pu tsa lu* 5a.

³⁸ VI: 1127, *Shan ch'uan* 11a.

³⁹ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 6a.

⁴⁰ VI: 1220, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 2b.

⁴¹ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

⁴² VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6b.

⁴³ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

⁴⁴ The "spirit paper" in Han ch'uan hien may also have been paper money.

⁴⁵ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

⁴⁶ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

⁴⁷ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

hien. From Sui yang hien it is also reported that millet, sweet wine, and paper money were used as *tsi* sacrifices to ancestors on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. At the same locality, the third of the first month was called *Sung tsu jī*—"Escort Ancestors Day"—, when money, obviously of paper, was burnt in doorways.⁴⁸ There was a spring Kan t'ung ts'üan, in the Ts'ao shī yüe temple at King chou fu, where *tao* prayers were offered to the *shen* spirits, while paper money was thrown into the well.⁴⁹

When paper money was used ceremonially, it was usual to burn it. The "spirit paper" in Han ch'uan hien, mentioned above, was burnt, as were the sheets of paper at T'ung shan hien. Paper money was burnt in Yüe chou fu,⁵⁰ Kung an hien,⁵¹ An lu fu,⁵² King shan hien,⁵³ Wu ch'ang hien⁵⁴ and, as seen earlier, in Sui yang hien and T'ung shan hien.⁵⁵ Ceremonial lanterns were often made of paper, and they, too, were not infrequently burnt after they had been used. There is evidence of this from Ch'ang te fu,⁵⁶ Yüe chou fu⁵⁷ and Kien li hien.⁵⁸ It should also be observed that in three of the cases in which paper boats are mentioned, these boats were burnt.

This is clear evidence that paper in different forms was associated with *shen* spirits and dead forefathers. It is also interesting to note that paper as money was most likely a substitute for metal.⁵⁹ Thus it should be possible to classify paper as belonging to the category metal in the *Wu hing* system. Further evidence of this is the fact that paper was burnt in ceremonial contexts. It has been shown above that one item of the *Wu hing* system is that fire destroys metal, and to me it seems plausible that this, among other things, was expressed in the burning.

⁴⁸ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4ab.

⁴⁹ VI: 1187, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 5b.

⁵⁰ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2b.

⁵¹ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 3b.

⁵² VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

⁵³ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

⁵⁴ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

⁵⁵ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6b.

⁵⁶ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

⁵⁷ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2a.

⁵⁸ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 4a.

⁵⁹ Coins were made of several different kinds of metal, and it is hardly likely that any special metal was implied in this connection.

Bamboo is twice found together with paper when miniature boats were made. It may, perhaps, be going too far to analyze the bamboo material on the basis of such a small material. But bamboo had a symbolic aspect which may have been significant in these two cases. This plant seems, on the Hupeh-Hunan plain, to have been associated with dead ancestors. Evidence of this is found in records from Ch'ang te fu, at least.⁶⁰ This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter VII.

The meaning of *wei* reeds is more difficult to discover. Apart from the information about their being used to make a miniature dragon boat, I have found only one reference to them. This says that on New Year's day, *wei* reeds were hung above doors in the town of King chou fu.⁶¹ No other information is given. It is very likely that this notice is based on *King Ch'u suei shi ki*, for the same thing is said in identical words and in the same context in this work.⁶² *Wei*, being some kind of reed, may possibly have been associated with water, but this is very uncertain. Hanging it above doors suggests that it may have been endowed with the power to drive away. Owing to the scantiness of the information, it is equally difficult to determine the meaning of the grasses used. One kind of grass was called *mao*, and it may have been the same as *po mao* used to sweep negative influence from the dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu (see Chapter V). Judging by its name, *po mao*—"white grass"—may have been associated with the colour white and the agent metal. It clearly had driving-away power. *Mao*—"water-mallow"—might very well have been associated with water, but this cannot be confirmed by other evidence.

Two of the statements mention "iron boats". One of them also said that the iron boat was a vessel for *shen jen*—"spirit persons". A paper boat was also used to "welcome spirits", and was called "spirit boat". This is interesting for it has been shown earlier, in Chapter V, that the dragon boats were most likely vessels for dead ancestors. Iron was thus related to *shen* spirits, but it could obviously also have a driving-away effect. A story from Ch'ang sha fu tells how three *kiao* dragons were hunted in the Siang River. It is said that *t'ie wu*—"things of iron"—were used to *chen*—"press down"—and *tsu*—"stop"—them.⁶³

⁶⁰ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

⁶¹ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

⁶² *King Ch'u suei shi ki*, 1a.

⁶³ VI: 1210, *T'ei miao* 1, 9a.

Iron may be assumed to have belonged to the metal category in the *Wu hing* system. On the other hand, five different metals, associated with the five agents, are sometimes mentioned. In this connection iron is related to black and water.⁶⁴ It is difficult to say how generally accepted this division was. In any case, iron probably had *yin* associations, since both metal and water are *yin* categories

Miniature boats were made of wood in Huang chou fu. This reminds one of the real dragon boats, which were made of *shan*—"conifer wood"—because of the excellent quality of this wood for boats.⁶⁵ Wood has its own category in the *Wu hing* system, and is associated with the male *yang* principle.

To sum up, it may be said that paper, bamboo and iron were associated with *shen* spirits and the dead. Iron, and probably also *mao* grass, as well as *wei* reeds, had "driving-away" properties. Paper and iron, and perhaps also the different vegetable materials, were related to the metal and water categories in the *Wu hing* system, and thereby to the *yin* principle. On the other hand wood, which occurred in one case, was probably related to the *yang* principle, unless it was some special kind of wood with other associations, but nothing is known about that.

The information given earlier about the miniature boats shows that the function attributed to them in six cases was that they cured people of illness, and in two that they were *jang* against accidents. All these statements suggest that driving-away properties were attributed to the boats. It may also be mentioned in this connection that in Ch'ang te fu, after the "To fight and cross over" ceremony was over, the water that had leaked into the boats was saved. It was later mixed with a "hundred herbs" and used for medicinal baths.⁶⁶

Dragon boats, by virtue of their name and appearance, were connected with *lung* dragons. In the general Chinese conception of the world, the *lung* dragon occupies an ambiguous position.⁶⁷ An attempt must therefore be made to elucidate the functions of the dragon symbol by referring to the local material from the region studied. Only on the basis of accounts from the Hupeh-Hunan plain is it possible to

⁶⁴ *Ts'ï hai, Wu kin.*

⁶⁵ II: 51, 3a.

⁶⁶ II: 51, 6a.

⁶⁷ A compilation of data on the nature of *lung* dragons found in literature has been made by de Visser, 1913.

describe the ties that bound the *lung* dragons to the ceremonial boats in this region.

Several accounts tell that the *lung* dragons lived in ponds and springs. We have seen earlier that, in Ch'ang te fu, a white dragon was said to hide in a spring on Mount Te shan, to the south of the town.⁶⁸ In the town itself was a pond, with which a yellow *lung* was associated.⁶⁹ *Lung* dragons were associated with ponds in and around Lung yang hien,⁷⁰ Yüan kiang hien,⁷¹ Ch'ang sha fu,⁷² Siang t'an hien,⁷³ Li ling hien,⁷⁴ Siang hiang hien,⁷⁵ An hua hien,⁷⁶ Liu yang hien,⁷⁷ Yüe chou fu,⁷⁸ Yung ting wei,⁷⁹ King chou fu,⁸⁰ Sung ts'i hien,⁸¹ Yi tu hien,⁸² Shī chou wei⁸³ and King chou yu wei.⁸⁴ Further information is available from Han ch'uan hien,⁸⁵ An lu fu,⁸⁶ Wu ch'ang fu⁸⁷ and Ta ye hien.⁸⁸ There is also other evidence, names of ponds, for example, suggesting that such waters were the dwelling places of *lung*.

Lung might also occur in rivers. A bend in a river at Ch'ang te fu had got its name, Wu lung kang—"Black Dragon's Bend"—, from a black dragon that "splashed" there.⁸⁹ In Ning hiang hien, brooks were conceived as dwelling places of *lung*.⁹⁰ The connection with rivers is

⁶⁸ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a.

⁶⁹ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 8a.

⁷⁰ VI: 1256, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 4b.

⁷¹ VI: 1256, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 7a; 1259, *Ts'i miao* 6a.

⁷² VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 2b.

⁷³ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 6a; 1213, *Ku tsi* 4ab.

⁷⁴ VI: 1203, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 6b, 7a.

⁷⁵ VI: 1203, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 9a.

⁷⁶ VI: 1204, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 6b, 7b.

⁷⁷ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 12b, 13a.

⁷⁸ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3b, 6a.

⁷⁹ VI: 1220, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 7b.

⁸⁰ VI: 1187, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3b.

⁸¹ VI: 1188, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 4a.

⁸² VI: 1188, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 11a.

⁸³ VI: 1189, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 5b.

⁸⁴ VI: 1189, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 6a.

⁸⁵ VI: 1127, *Shan ch'uan* 10b.

⁸⁶ VI: 1136, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 2a.

⁸⁷ VI: 1116, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3a.

⁸⁸ VI: 1117, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 17a.

⁸⁹ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a.

⁹⁰ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 12b.

also confirmed by information from Yu hien,⁹¹ King chou fu, where a *lung* lived in a river bank,⁹² Kien li hien,⁹³ Shī chou wei,⁹⁴ Han yang fu, where a whirlpool in the Yang tsī kiang was associated with a *lung*,⁹⁵ and Han ch'uan hien, where another river shore was concerned.⁹⁶

Lakes might be dwelling places of *lung*. One example of this is reported from An lu fu, where there was a lake called Lung mu hu—"Dragon Mother Lake"—with "quick and intractable" *lung* dragons.⁹⁷ There is also a report from Ning hiang hien, which says that *lung* inhabited fields, most likely flooded rice fields.⁹⁸ Other haunts of *lung* were caves or ravines, which of the two is not always clearly expressed. There was a cave in Siang t'an hien called Lung k'u—"Dragon Hole". In this cave was a pond which never overflowed and never dried up. The cave was evidently the dwelling place of a *lung* dragon.⁹⁹ Caves or ravines were clearly associated with *lung* at, for example, Liu yang hien, where there were *lung siang*—"dragon representations"—in a cave,¹⁰⁰ Li ling hien,¹⁰¹ Yüeh chou fu,¹⁰² Li chou,¹⁰³ Hua jung hien, where it is said that *lung* cast their skins in a cave at Shī lung shan,¹⁰⁴ and Sung tsī hien.¹⁰⁵ It is reported occasionally that *lung* live near or in cliffs. There was a cliff at An lu fu called Ku lou yen. It is said that "at the bottom of the cliff is a dragon pond. In spring in the first month and later, the cliff trembles as during an earthquake. All the *lung* go in and out."¹⁰⁶ In Siang hiang hien was a rock on which the *lung* dragons sharpened their horns.¹⁰⁷ At Yu hien was a *lung ts'i*—

⁹¹ VI: 1204, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 3a.

⁹² VI: 1187, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 4b.

⁹³ VI: 1188, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 1b.

⁹⁴ VI: 1189, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 5a.

⁹⁵ VI: 1130, *Ts'i miao* 1b.

⁹⁶ VI: 1130, *Ts'i miao* 3a.

⁹⁷ VI: 1136, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3a.

⁹⁸ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 12b.

⁹⁹ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 6a.

¹⁰⁰ VI: 1203, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 3a.

¹⁰¹ VI: 1203, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 6a.

¹⁰² VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 1b.

¹⁰³ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 9a.

¹⁰⁴ VI: 1220, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 3a.

¹⁰⁵ VI: 1188, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 3b.

¹⁰⁶ VI: 1136, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 2a.

¹⁰⁷ VI: 1203, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 10a.

“dragon hall”—on a cliff.¹⁰⁸ Ponds and caves connected with *lung* were usually situated on mountains; in some cases the dragon ponds were on “the tops” of mountains. The names of mountains frequently referred to some *lung*. To my mind, this material is too vague to allow of *lung* dragons being definitely associated with mountains or cliffs. The account from An lu fu is the only one that more explicitly connects *lung* with mountains, but even in this case a pond is mentioned, and it is not unlikely that it was with this pond that the dragons were associated.

The general conception, found in the whole of China, that *lung* dragons produced clouds and rain, was also common in the Hupeh-Hunan plain. It was customary, for instance, to perform ceremonial actions at dragon ponds during periods of drought, in order to obtain rain. Evidence of this is forthcoming from the following places: Ch’ang sha fu,¹⁰⁹ An hua hien,¹¹⁰ Siang t’an hien,¹¹¹ Siang hiang hien,¹¹² P’ing kiang hien,¹¹³ An hiang hien,¹¹⁴ Yung ting wei,¹¹⁵ Ma liao so,¹¹⁶ King chou fu,¹¹⁷ Sung tsī hien,¹¹⁸ Shī chou wei,¹¹⁹ King chou yu wei¹²⁰ and others. Some accounts associate *lung* with the wind. In Li ling hien, *lung* dragons were “frightened” in times of drought and immediately the wind began to blow, and continued for several days.¹²¹ Here the concept wind was intimately connected with rain. Seven li north-west of this place was a cave called Feng tung—“Cave of the Winds”. It was believed that a *feng lung*—“wind dragon”—inhabited this cave.¹²² On Mount Lung siu shan at Hua jung hien there was a hole with

¹⁰⁸ VI: 1204, *Shan ch’uan* 3, 3a.

¹⁰⁹ VI: 1202, *Shan ch’uan* 1, 2b.

¹¹⁰ VI: 1204, *Shan ch’uan* 3, 6b.

¹¹¹ VI: 1204, *Shan ch’uan* 3, 9a.

¹¹² VI: 1210, *Ts’i miao* 1, 6a.

¹¹³ VI: 1219, *Shan ch’uan* 1, 8a.

¹¹⁴ VI: 1219, *Shan ch’uan* 1, 11b.

¹¹⁵ VI: 1220, *Shan ch’uan* 2, 7b.

¹¹⁶ VI: 1220, *Shan chu’an* 2, 9b.

¹¹⁷ VI: 1187, *Shan ch’uan* 1, 3b.

¹¹⁸ VI: 1188, *Shan ch’uan* 2, 3a.

¹¹⁹ VI: 1189, *Shan ch’uan* 3, 5a.

¹²⁰ VI: 1189, *Shan ch’uan* 3, 6a.

¹²¹ VI: 1213, *Ku tsi* 9b, 10a.

¹²² VI: 1213, *Ku tsi* 10ab.

lung clouds. When these rose into the sky rain followed, "and when rumbling and noises are heard the wind begins blowing at once."¹²³

It is often said that dragons had definite colours. White *lung* were found at Ch'ang te fu,¹²⁴ Li chou,¹²⁵ Yung ting wei,¹²⁶ King chou fu, where the white dragon lay in a black pond,¹²⁷ King chou yu wei, in a dark spring,¹²⁸ Han ch'uan hien¹²⁹ and Wu ch'ang fu.¹³⁰ Black dragons are mentioned in accounts from Ch'ang te fu,¹³¹ Yüan kiang hien, in a black pond,¹³² and Wu ch'ang fu.¹³³ Two records from Ch'ang te fu¹³⁴ and Hiang shan hien¹³⁵ mention the presence of yellow dragons in springs. The names of different kinds of temple buildings often refer to coloured *lung* dragons. Colours mentioned in this connection are green, yellow, white, black and purple but these references are far too vague to justify their being used in the present study.

Thus we have seen that ponds, springs, rivers, lakes and rice fields were places favoured by *lung* dragons, that is, dragons were generally associated with water. They also haunted caves and ravines, in other words, places that should have had underground associations. Water and "underground" both have decided *yin* associations, and *lung* dragons seem therefore primarily to favour "*yin* environments". According to the material studied here, white was most often associated with dragons. Other colours were black and yellow. According to the *Wu hing* system, white should have been associated with metal and black with water. When a white *lung* inhabited a pond — in two cases it is said explicitly that the water in the pond was dark or black — it seems to me that this could have been a complex symbol referring to a combination of the agents metal and water. Metal produced water according to the *Wu hing* system, and this dragon pond may possibly have been

¹²³ VI: 1220, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 3a.

¹²⁴ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a.

¹²⁵ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 9a.

¹²⁶ VI: 1220, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 7b.

¹²⁷ VI: 1187, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3b.

¹²⁸ VI: 1189, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 6a.

¹²⁹ VI: 1127, *Shan ch'uan* 10b; 1130, *Ts'i miao* 3a.

¹³⁰ VI: 1116, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3a.

¹³¹ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a.

¹³² VI: 1259, *Ts'i miao* 6a.

¹³³ VI: 1116, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 3a.

¹³⁴ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 8a.

¹³⁵ VI: 1189, *Shan ch'uan* 3, 2b.

referring to productive power, e. g. in connection with rain, clouds and wind. It has been shown earlier in this chapter that five-coloured dragon figures were related to rain-producing, probably with reference to the productive cycle of the five agents. A black dragon in a pond — in one case a pond with black water — should be a double *yin* symbol, and therefore a negative phenomenon. A yellow dragon in a pond should, according to this theory, have been conceived as a combination of symbols with associations to the earth and water agents. These two agents are related to each other in such a way that water is destroyed by earth. Thus a plausible assumption would be that such "yellow" dragon springs were presumed to possess driving-away, destructive powers. On the other hand it is not unlikely that yellow *lung* were attributed with the power of causing droughts. There is an account from Yüe chou fu which tells that there was a mountain called Huang lung shan—"Mountain of the Yellow Dragon"—150 *li* south-east of the town. During years of drought, *tao* prayers for rain were offered there.¹³⁶ It is possible that these were intended to avert this negative process, that is, that earth destroys water. Owing to the scantiness of the material, however, care must be taken not to make any definite conclusions about the colour symbolism. The above discussion is of a hypothetical nature, and only a possible explanation of the phenomena described. The associations may have been directed in many other, to us diffuse, directions. The material provides no further information.

We saw earlier in this chapter how the dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu were painted in different colours and combinations of colours. At this place there were two five-coloured boats, one green, one red, one white, one black and one purple. I think it probable that these boats were associated with the different agents of the *Wu hing* system according to their colours. It has been shown that the dragon boats were intimately related to *lung* dragons, and it seems likely that *lung* dragons themselves acted as vessels. Further, the ceremonial boats seem to have had *yin* associations. It has been shown, too, that the *lung* dragons were often related to the *yin* principle. To me it seems very likely that dead ancestors used *yin* principle dragons, that is, death and underground dragons, as vessels. By virtue of their colour, these dragons had, over and above their *yin* nature, an association with one or all of the five agents.

¹³⁶ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 2a.

An attempt has been made in this chapter to analyze the symbols and associations related to the boats participating in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony in Ch'ang te fu. I find the following conclusions plausible. The dragon boats, with one exception, were painted in colours referring to the five agents. The combination of five colours, which occurred on two boats, referred to all the activities together and to their productive and destructive interrelationships. The boats' flags acted as landmarks, and welcomed *shen* spirits, in this case the dead ancestors of the *tsu* groups, and perhaps also *lung* dragons. The colours of the flags were related to the colours of the respective boats, with one exception. I have been unable to throw more light on the accounts of the costumes or uniforms of the special functionaries on the boats, the "lucky seals" of the crews and the small flags and egret plumes they wore in their hair. The discussion of the *miao shen* — "temple spirits"—attached to the boats showed that these spirits had one thing in common. They were all drivers-away, subjugators, and had destructive ability. In connection with the dragon boats it has been shown that the symbolic aspects of the boats had associations with dead ancestors, *shen* spirits and the *yin* principle. They were also invested with ability to drive away. Finally the dragon boats themselves seem to have been *lung* dragons acting as vessels. These *lung* seem to have been *yin* principle dragons, and therefore death and underground dragons. But they were also related in some way to the five agents.

VII

“To Fight and Cross Over”

In Ch'ang te fu, “To fight and cross over” was performed “in the middle of the district”. The boat regions farthest from the place where the ceremony was performed were Yü kia kang, fifteen *li* down the river, and Po sha tu, thirty-five *li* upstream. That part of the river where the boats “fought and crossed over” did not exceed ten *li* in length. The river was wide there, and the place was considered suitable for the ceremony. The water rose and fell irregularly during the fifth month, and the distance between the banks of the river changed continually. The south bank was covered with luxurious grass and dense woods, and had a snow-white, sandy beach. On the north bank were tall buildings with painted balustrades, and the old, crenelated, thick town wall. The onlookers congregated on the north bank. The tall buildings must be those let to people who wished to watch the ceremony. They were three or four storeys high and occupied a stretch five or six *li* long. These buildings could not provide enough places for all the spectators. Many people gathered on the south bank, others found places in boats on the river.¹

We have already seen that the town officials watched the dragon boat ceremony from special tall buildings. Yang Sī ch'ang says, however, that this custom was no longer observed in his days. The special buildings for the officials were adorned with “multi-coloured decorations” and bamboo mats. Before the ceremonial struggle was begun, all the boats participating had to visit the officials. The drums were muffled and the paddles were plied rapidly. When the boats were approaching the beach, the *t'ou* man turned his face toward the bow, fell on his knees and bowed. When the boat reached the beach he went ashore and

¹ II: 51, 4a, 7b.

entered all the buildings and greeted the officials by knocking his head on the floor. The officials then gave him presents. Those who came late were received less cordially. Yang Sī ch'ang says that they were "afraid of being whipped".²

Immediately before the ceremony was to begin, the men in the boats threw two different things into the water; one consisted of *t'ao fu*—"peach amulets"—and the other of *ping kuan*—"soldier pots". These soldier pots were full of a mixture of *mi* rice and *tou* beans.³

The "To fight and cross over" ceremony was something like a boat race. It had two names, "Up and down the long river" and "To divide the river into north and south". But these names did not cover the valid rules. The river was crossed from north to south. Two boats competed with each other. As a rule they were paddled side by side, each crew endeavouring to reach the opposite bank first.⁴ Yang Sī ch'ang's account describes a number of tricks and tactical manoeuvres employed in crossing the river. A boat might, for example, be propelled rapidly to the middle of the river, where it was allowed to drift while the crew prepared for an encounter with another boat. It is said that "some roll flags and rest the drums and manifest secrecy" to win the race. It is also said, clearly in connection with a struggle between two boats, that they "suddenly advance and suddenly stop". In this way the crews strove to exhaust each other. Two boats might lie "one crosswise and one lengthwise". They rowed in different directions and endeavoured to grapple with each other. At times three boats might be engaged. One boat might tempt two others to fight against each other. Then the first boat awaited its own chance, paddled round and returned suddenly to attack. This was called *Sung ch'uan*—"To escort the boat". A strong boat might drive away and pursue a weaker one; this was called *Kan ch'uan*—"To pursue the boat."⁵ It was obviously not merely a rowing race. The boats fought each other in something similar to a naval battle. Yang Sī ch'ang uses such words as *chan*—"fight"—*sai*—"compete"—and *tou*—"quarrel"—when describing the struggle between the boats. He also reports that bamboo canes and "goose-egg stones" were taken into the boat to be used in the fray. It was not unusual for boats to be sunk, and it was fighting with these canes and stones, and the stones thrown from

² II: 51, 8a.

³ II: 51, 5b.

⁴ II: 51, 4a.

⁵ II: 51, 4b.

the banks that caused these wrecks.⁶ An account in a local chronicle says that in Ch'ang te fu they fought to win or lose. Finally, *ou*—"fights"—broke out and men were wounded, drowned and killed.⁷

We have already seen in the chapter dealing with the social background to the "To fight and cross over" ceremony how the spectators reacted to the passing dragon boats. When a boat passed its own region spectators presented the crew with pieces of red and green silk cloth. Firecrackers were lighted and the onlookers applauded and waved fans. But when a dragon boat passed a rival region, the onlookers shouted to show their anger and threw stones at it. The crew replied by holding their paddles upright and shaking their hands to show their strength, that is to say, they behaved as if they were struggling with another boat in the ceremony. The onlookers participated actively in the ceremonial struggle.

There were also special small boats on the river during the ceremony; their task was to supply the competitors with food and wine. Each of these small boats was equipped with two trees in which "yellow money" was hung. They also had "multi-coloured scrolls", and drummers and flutists.

The food and wine supplied to the men in the dragon boats by the small boats during the ceremony were intended to provide meals of a special character. The consumption of these things was subject to certain regulations. Even if the paddlers were "drunk and satiated" they had to eat and drink everything; neither crumbs of food nor drops of wine might be left. If, nevertheless, something still remained, the leavings were sunk into the river. All the food bowls and chopsticks were thrown into the water, too. They might not be used more than once.⁸

A boat that had left the fray victoriously was paddled backwards, stern first. The men on board held their paddles upright and danced for joy, beat gongs and played wind instruments in the middle of the boat when they passed a losing boat. Time after time the defeated crew was "covered" and "pressed down". The losers tried to do the same, but without enthusiasm. When the boats were out of reach of each other the losers admitted defeat by silence.⁹

The boats dispersed towards evening. In the *kia* families of the *t'ou*

⁶ II: 51, 4b, 7b, 8a.

⁷ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a.

⁸ II: 51, 6a.

⁹ II: 51, 8a.

functionaries gave a feast. Neighbours, relatives and friends paid visits to the victors and gave them presents. The victors were feasted the following day, too. Multi-coloured ribbons were tied above the doorways, and some plays were acted to honour the crew. Some wrote scrolls with parallel sentences and *siao ling*—"small commands"—which were hung up over the town gates. Dogs, tortoises, *k'ung k'ung* plants and fruit were also hung up. These served to ridicule those who had been defeated. When they, or people belonging to the same region, passed beneath these articles, they bowed their heads and went away. Their relatives and friends sent them parcels containing these things to taunt them.¹⁰

The festive period closed on the eighteenth day of the fifth month. *Sheng* sacrificial animals, wine and yellow paper money were used on this day. The dragon boats were paddled rapidly downstream and these things were *liu*—"let float"—*fen*—"burnt"—and *lo*—"poured out". Specks and boils and premature death were *tsu chou*—"cursed". The evil influence was allowed to drift away with the current. This conclusion was called *Sung piao*. The meaning of this term will be discussed below. After this the dragon boats returned in "secret" without flags and drums, and they were pulled up on the beach, propped up and covered over. The great dragon boat festival was over for the year.¹¹

We have also seen that the many fatal accidents that occurred during the "To fight and cross over" ceremony had caused the authorities to prohibit the ceremony. This prohibition was not observed, according to the local chronicle mentioned above. Yang Sī ch'ang also mentions a prohibition, but says that the ceremony was postponed for a time, so that the attention of the authorities would be less keen.¹²

When reading Yang Sī ch'ang's account, one observes that the dragon boat ceremony had earlier had an official political connection, which is in sharp contrast to the prohibition imposed later. The actions of the *t'ou* functionaries in this connection seem to express the relationship between the lineage groups and representatives of the imperial authority. It is difficult to see just why this status demonstration was made in conjunction with the boat festival. It is also difficult to say whether a *t'ou* acted as a dead ancestor or as a living representative of his kin group on this occasion. Perhaps we are concerned with a system of a very extensive character, namely the symbolic aspect of relations and

¹⁰ II: 51, 8a.

¹¹ II: 51, 3a, 5b.

¹² II: 51, 3a; VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a.

actions in connection with the wielding of the administrative power. It is impossible to deal with this large and extremely interesting problem within the rather limited scope of the present study. For this a fairly complete picture of the symbolic structure of the region and a detailed investigation of its local administration would be required. Thus the problems connected with this aspect must be left for future research. A few views will be expressed in the following discussion, however. The contrasting prohibition imposed later may possibly be related to the general process of change mentioned by Yang Sī ch'ang. It seems to me that the later prohibition tells about a difference of opinion on the dragon boat feast between two social classes—the officials on the one hand and the ordinary rural population on the other. The authorities lacked knowledge and understanding of the traditional values of the peasants in connection with production and issued, from the aspect of what to them were rational points of view—the great numbers of people drowned and perhaps also the general inflamed atmosphere—a prohibition to hold the feast. The fact that the ceremonies were performed in spite of this prohibition, and that the efforts of the authorities in the light of this seem to have been rather half-hearted, may mean that the authorities wanted the ceremony to take place under control rather than cease completely. Yang Sī ch'ang himself suggests such a possibility.¹³ The gap between the authorities and the peasants, mentioned above, did not exist earlier. The officials then had a function to perform in ceremonial connections, which included all members of the community.

Immediately before the fight between the boats began, "peach amulets" and "soldier pots" were thrown into the water. Yang Sī ch'ang points out that the purpose of these articles was not to ensure victory in the struggle. He says that the peach amulets could "kill a hundred *kuei* demons", and that they were things serving as *jang* sacrifices to avert calamities.¹⁴ The concept that wood of the peach tree dispels evil influence seems to be common to the whole of China, and can be traced in the earliest literature. A sixth century source—*King Ch'u suei shī ki*—says that peach soup was eaten at New Year celebrations on the Hupeh plain. Peach amulets were placed at the doors, and it is said that "the hundred *kuei* demons fear them."¹⁵ Later information given in local chronicles mentions similar customs, illustrating how the "driv-

¹³ II: 51, 8ab.

¹⁴ II: 51, 3a, 5b.

¹⁵ *King Ch'u suei shī ki*, 1a.

- ing-away" peach amulets were used. In Ch'ang te fu, for example, such
- ✓ amulets were fastened to doors at New Year celebrations.¹⁶ The same custom prevailed in Yüe chou fu.¹⁷ A report from King chou fu says that peach soup was taken as medicine. It is said, too, that the peach is
 - ✓ the *tsing* essence of the five agents, and that it averts hidden and evil *k'i* influences and controls the hundred *kuei* demons.¹⁸ This statement is copied from Tsung Lin's comments on *King Ch'u suei shi ki*, however.
 - ✓ Peach amulets were used in the same place on the twenty-fourth of the twelfth month.¹⁹ In An lu fu²⁰ and King shan hien,²¹ peach amulets were hung up at New Year celebrations. It is said that the amulets were changed in all these places, which may imply that they hung over the doors all the year round, and were renewed at New Year. The peach amulets were most probably twigs or branches, for fruit was hardly
 - ✓ available at that time of the year. Peaches were associated with longevity and immortality throughout the whole of China. This was clearly also the case on the Hupeh-Hunan plain. One example of this is a story concerning a mountain called Lung an shan, near Siang t'an hien. The story relates how, during Sung times, some women had ascended Tung t'ao ling—"the Eastern Peach Mountains"—and seen the great melon-
 - ✓ like peaches there. They "chewed them" and became *sien* immortals.²² Different values may have been attributed to peach twigs and peaches, but it is also possible that we are concerned with another case of ambiguity—the peach symbol may stand for productive power (long
 - ✓ life) and destructive ability (the elimination of *kuei*). Twigs and fruit may have been the two expressions of the ambiguity of the concept of the peach.

Yang Si ch'ang describes the origin and implications of soldier pots by a quotation from a work dating from Liang times, entitled *Sü ts'i hie ki*. The quotation refers to the prevailing Chinese view that the

- ✓ dragon boat festival originated in a search for a drowned minister, K'ü Yüan. This will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. The quotation says that people in the Ch'u region mourned K'ü Yüan, and

¹⁶ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a.

¹⁷ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2b.

¹⁸ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

¹⁹ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2b.

²⁰ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2b.

²¹ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

²² VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 6ab.

that on every *Wu jī*—"the Fifth Day"—tubes of bamboo were filled with *mi* rice. These tubes were thrown into the water as a *tsi* sacrifice to the minister. During the *Kien wu* period of the Han dynasty (A. D. 25 to A. D. 56), a man named Ou Huei²³, suddenly, in full daylight, caught sight of a man who called himself San lu ta fu, that is, by K'ü Yüan's title as a minister. This man instructed Ou Huei to close the ends of the tubes with the *lien* plant (*Melia*) and tie five "multi-coloured threads" round them. If this was omitted, the tubes would be stolen by the *kiao lung* dragons. Yang Sī ch'ang maintains that the use of a kind of rice dumpling—*tsung*—with *lien* plant leaves and a girdle of threads in five colours had evolved from the use of the bamboo tubes. He also suggests that the soldier pots imply a transformation of the bamboo tubes.²⁴

Otherwise Yang Sī ch'ang says nothing about the use of *tsung* dumplings, but they are mentioned in a local chronicle from Ch'ang te fu. There, however, they are called *küe shu*—"horn millet"—a designation also used by Yang Sī ch'ang. The chronicler says that these dumplings were eaten.²⁵ In another connection, the same source says that in this place, rice was wrapped in bamboo leaves every year on the fifth of the fifth month. These dumplings were shaped like rams' horns and boiled. They were called *küe shu*, and were used in mourning for K'ü Yüan.²⁶ In Ch'ang sha fu, *tsung* were made with a girdle of *lien* plant leaves and five-coloured silk in accordance with the K'ü Yüan tradition.²⁷ In Siang yin hien the dumplings were called *küe shu* and had a girdle of coloured threads.²⁸ *Küe shu*, together with *p'u* reeds and the *ai* plant (*Artemisia*?) were presents which, in Yüe chou fu, were exchanged between *yin k'i*—"affinal relatives".²⁹ *Tsung* were made from *lien* plant leaves and five threads in King chou fu,³⁰ and in Han ch'uan hien "*küe shu* were wrapped up".³¹ People in the An lu fu region gave

²³ The name is written in two ways, see index of characters. It has also been said that the event took place during the *Kien an* period (A.D. 196—220).

VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 2b, 3a.

²⁴ II: 51, 5b.

²⁵ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

²⁶ VI: 1260, *Ku tsi* 2a.

²⁷ VI: 1217, *Pu ki shi* 1a.

²⁸ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 2b, 3a.

²⁹ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2ab.

³⁰ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

³¹ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b, 2a.

küe shu to each other as presents.³² *Küe shu* was eaten i King shan hien.³³ In Sui yang hien *ts'in* relatives presented each other with *küe shu* and *yen tan*—"salted eggs". The same source says that bamboo leaves were rolled up and tied together with multi-coloured threads.³⁴ *Küe shu* were also used in Te an fu.³⁵ In Yün meng hien, *küe shu* were used in the *tsi* sacrifices made on the roofs to the twenty strangers, that is, most likely to the dead ancestors who had arrived in the world of the living.³⁶ *Küe shu*, *kao 'yi*—"steamed dumplings"—and fans with pictures were exchanged as presents in Kuang tsi hien.³⁷ All these notices are related to the *Tuan wu* feast. Finally, it is said in *King Ch'u sui shi ki* that during the sixth century A. D. *tsung* were eaten at "The High Point of Summer", that is, the summer solstice, on the Hupeh plain.³⁸ The relation between the summer solstice and *Tuan wu* has been discussed in Chapter II above.

Although we cannot be certain that *tsung* or *küe shu* and soldier pots 兵罐 have developed directly from bamboo tubes, to me it seems very probable that we are here concerned with three variants of a complex symbol. The soldier pots were filled with a mixture of rice and beans. This mixture had undoubtedly special significance. In the sixth century, rice porridge, with beans to which oil or fat had been added, was made on the fifteenth day of the first month on the Hupeh plain. It was used at the door of the hall of ancestors as a *tsi* sacrifice.³⁹ A local chronicle mentions that rice porridge with red beans was made in Kien li hien at the winter solstice. It was used as a *jang* sacrifice to malevolent *kuei* demons.⁴⁰ In An lu fu on the eighth of the twelfth month, rice porridge with beans and different kinds of fruit was made.⁴¹ It is interesting to note that one of these notices mentions red beans. This seems to suggest that they were associated with the *yang* agent fire. It might also be assumed that the more or less whitish grains of rice were associated with the *yin* agent metal. According to the *Wu hing* system, fire destroys

³² VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

³³ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

³⁴ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4b.

³⁵ II: 51, 19a.

³⁶ II: 51, 18b.

³⁷ VI: 1178, *Feng su* 3b.

³⁸ *King Ch'u sui shi ki*, 12b.

³⁹ *ibid.*, 5b.

⁴⁰ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 4a.

⁴¹ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2b.

metal, and it may be that the mixture of rice and beans had a destructive effect and destroyed negative influence. The account from Kien li hien may point in this direction. To my mind, what is more important in this mixture is that the two ingredients had *yang* and *yin* associations. Thus it may be hypothesized that the soldier pots were containers for male and female substances.

The story of Ou Huei and San lu ta fu mentions bamboo tubes. But bamboo tubes are not mentioned in any accounts of the ceremonial customs on the Hupeh-Hunan plain except in this story. We have seen earlier, in a story given in Chapter VI above, that a woman found a bamboo tube drifting in the water. When she opened it she found that it contained a child. Starting from this story I should like to propose the hypothesis that the bamboo tube was a womb symbol. In the story of Ou Huei, the tube contained rice, and I have assumed that rice was a female *yin* substance. According to the story of Ou Huei, the tubes were equipped with five-coloured ribbons and *lien* plant leaves. The destructive power of the five-colour symbol is stressed in the text—it is said that the ribbons were protection against malevolent *kiao lung* dragons. But the associations of this ambiguous symbol with productive power may also have bound it to the womb tube. The *lien* plant obviously also had a destructive function.

Tsung and *küe shu* were made from bamboo leaves or *lien* plant leaves rolled round rice. Both these plants were no doubt related to the bamboo tube mentioned in the story of Ou Huei, and I assume that these rice dumplings were also womb symbols. In Sui yang hien they were compared with salted eggs—probably also a symbol of production. The taste of salts is related in the *Wu hing* system to the agent water and to the female *yin* principle. The *lien* plant had a driving away effect. Now it seems that the bamboo leaves had a similar power. The following accounts seem to provide evidence of this. Branches of bamboo could be used in ceremonial sweeping, which must have meant that something was to be removed.⁴² Thus at the *Tsing ming* feast in the third month, graves were swept with bamboo branches in Ch'ang te fu,⁴³ and on the twenty-fourth of the twelfth month doors in King chou fu were swept with bamboo branches.⁴⁴ A driving-away effect is also implied by the

⁴² Cf. Chapter V, where it is said that the outsides of the dragon boats were swept with a certain plant.

⁴³ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

⁴⁴ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2b.

custom prevailing in An lu fu of putting branches of bamboo above doors on New Year's eve.⁴⁵ It is reported from several places that bamboo was thrown into the fire during New Year celebrations. The bamboo banged as it burnt, and the bangs cast out illness in Ch'ang te fu,⁴⁶ and in King chou fu they drove away "privy demons" which endeavoured to carry away the *tsing p'o* souls of children.⁴⁷ Other accounts are extant from Han ch'uan hien⁴⁸ and Swei yang hien.⁴⁹ The custom is mentioned already in *King Ch'u suei shi ki*, where it is said that the bangs drove away *kuei* demons.⁵⁰ To me it seems probable that these bangs were connected in some way with a driving-away effect of the bamboo material.⁵¹ Thus my theory is that the soldier pots in Ch'ang te fu, the bamboo tubes of the Ou Huei story, *tsung* and *kue shu* were different forms of a womb symbol. The womb contained rice and beans or only rice. Apart from its association with the productive power, it may also have had—in any case in the forms of bamboo tubes and dumplings—certain associations with driving-away power.

We have already seen that the dragon boats were probably conceived as being paddled by the dead ancestors of the different lineage groups. This assumption may be related to the statement that nothing of the food to be eaten and the wine drunk by the crew might be left, and that all leavings were thrown overboard with bowls and chopsticks. These actions might be explained if these meals are regarded as a kind of "sacrifice to ancestors". The special small boats that provided the dragon boats with food and drink may possibly have been conceived as "sacrificial altars". The food had been collected in advance by the *t'ou* functionary, probably from most of the *kia* families, who were the members of the *tsu* group. Thus this "sacrifice to ancestors" was the collective manifestation of a *tsu* group, perhaps comparable to the

⁴⁵ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2b.

⁴⁶ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 2a.

⁴⁷ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2b.

⁴⁸ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

⁴⁹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4a.

⁵⁰ *King Ch'u suei shi ki*, 1a.

⁵¹ It may be mentioned in this connection that a harvest festival was held during the Sung period by the K'i lao tribe in the mountain regions west of Ch'ang te fu. Men and women formed two sides and threw a five-coloured bag containing *tou su*—"beans and grain"—back and forth. This division into men and women may imply that the contents of the bag were also imagined to be divided into male and female. *K'i man ts'ung siao*, 6b.

annual ceremonies in the common ancestral hall. This custom may also be compared with the custom in Yün meng hien, where the "strangers", that is, the dead ancestors, arriving were received with *tsi* sacrifices on the "ridges of houses" in the form of *sheng lao*—"sacrificial animals"—, wine, sweet wine, *küe shu* dumplings and fruit in season.⁵² A report from Yüe chou fu may also be placed in relation to sacrifices to spirits of ancestors. It is said that people walked along the verge of the water placing bowls with wine and meat as *si* sacrifices to the *shen* spirits.⁵³ The small boats with the food had two trees on board, in which yellow money, probably paper money, was hung. An account from Yu hien says that the dragon head, that is, the stern of the dragon boat, was fitted with a bamboo top into which paper money was inserted, and that with this branch *k'i* prayers were offered for *yi ch'an*—"easy births".⁵⁴ Another notice, from Ch'ang te fu, says that, at the *Ts'ing ming* festival in the third month, graves were swept with bamboo branches; afterwards paper money was hung on the branches and they were stuck into the graves. This custom was called *piao fen*—"top branch graves".⁵⁵ In Sui yang hien, too, top branches and paper money were placed on graves at *Ts'ing ming*.⁵⁶ The trees on the small boats in Ch'ang te fu were probably such top branches of bamboo. Thus bamboo branches and hanging paper money are obviously related to dead ancestors, which fits into my theory that the special small boats served as a kind of sacrificial altar to them. I assumed earlier that bamboo was a double symbol of both productive and driving-away power. The account from Yu hien tells of associations with the productive ability. But these branches might also have served as a kind of landmark for the ancestors, as is suggested by the term *piao fen*. The meaning of *piao* will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. It may be that, in connection with the small boats, they also played a protective, that is, driving-away, role with regard to the sacrificial gifts.

We have seen in Chapter VI above that paper and paper money were connected with dead ancestors. To this may be added that three accounts, all referring to New Year celebrations, mention the colours of the paper money. In An lu fu, branches of conifers and bamboo, and

⁵² II: 51, 19a.

⁵³ II: 51, 19b.

⁵⁴ II: 51, 19b.

⁵⁵ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

⁵⁶ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4b.

five-coloured paper money were hung over doors.⁵⁷ Perhaps the money was hung on the branches in this case, too? Five-coloured money was hung over doors in King shan hien, too,⁵⁸ and the same custom is found in Suei yang hien.⁵⁹ The paper money used at the dragon boat ceremony in Ch'ang te fu was thus a different colour from this five-coloured New Year money. The yellow in Ch'ang te fu was probably associated with the agent earth and the centre of the compass.

It is convenient to consider the *kiao* or *kiao lung* phenomenon in conjunction with the story of Ou Huei. *Kiao* is usually rendered "scaly dragon", and seems to refer to a malevolent and malicious type of dragon. The material from the Hupeh-Hunan plain confirms this. There were *kiao lung* in a spring at Ts'i li hien,⁶⁰ but nothing is said about their nature. A bend in a river near Kien li hien was called Lung yüan—"Dragon Bend". *Kiao lung* that caused drowning were said to live there.⁶¹ A story about one Hü Tsing yang, a dragon killer active during the third century A. D., refers to some places in the region studied.⁶² Reports from Siang yin hien,⁶³ Ch'ang sha fu,⁶⁴ Yüe chou fu⁶⁵ and Ta ye hien⁶⁶ refer to the story of Hü Tsing yang, and say that he pursued or killed *kiao* dragons. Stories about similar *kiao* dragon killers exist from Hua jung hien⁶⁷ and Suei yang hien.⁶⁸ *Kiao* was thus something negative, and appears in the story of Ou Huei as a negative symbol, for an essential part of the story explains how to protect the bamboo tubes (dumplings, pots) against *kiao*.

Yang Sī ch'ang was well aware of the K'ü Yüan tradition, but maintains that "To fight and cross over" was a *jang* sacrifice to prevent calamities. He also says that the ceremony was related in some way to the year's crops—a *pu* prediction about the harvest. A fragment of a folk song said: "If the multi-coloured boat *ying*—"gets surplus"—, the

⁵⁷ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2b.

⁵⁸ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

⁵⁹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 5a.

⁶⁰ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 11a.

⁶¹ VI: 1188, *Shan ch'uan*, 2, 1b.

⁶² The complete story is given in Werner 1932, 173 ff.

⁶³ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 11a.

⁶⁴ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 9a; 1213, *Ku tsi* 2a.

⁶⁵ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 2b.

⁶⁶ VI: 1117, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 17a; 1121, *Ts'i miao* 18b.

⁶⁷ VI: 1219, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7b; 1223, *Ts'i miao* 2b.

⁶⁸ VI: 1121, *Ts'i miao* 15a.

season's crop is obtained." This probably meant that the crop would be a good one if this boat was successful in the fray. Yang Sī ch'ang says that this was an isolated phrase, without any text either before or after it, and that he did not know its origin. The claim made in the song was confirmed time after time, however.⁶⁹ A local chronicle says that "To fight and cross over" was regarded as a *sī* sacrifice in Ch'ang te fu, obviously to K'ü Yüan. It is also said that the ceremony was performed to "call him back" or to "mourn for him".⁷⁰ In Yu hien they paddled to "mourn" for K'ü Yüan, and the play was also *lo*—"joy"—to pregnant women.⁷¹ An account from Yüe chou fu tells that they paddled in competition, and this was regarded as *jang* against calamities and illness.⁷² In King chou fu they fought and crossed over to "rescue" K'ü Yüan.⁷³ In Han ch'uan hien they fought and "mourned" K'ü Yüan,⁷⁴ and mourned in the same way in An lu fu.⁷⁵

In addition to Yang Sī ch'ang's account from Ch'ang te fu and a statement in a local chronicle from the same place, there exist a few fragmentary notices about "To fight and cross over" from the Hupeh-Hunan plain. An anonymous writer, in a poem dating from T'ang times, *Yüe chou kuan king tu*—"Watching 'To fight and cross over' in Yüe chou"—, says that the boats fought in twos, and it is said that "side by side they drive away".⁷⁶ In King chou fu, according to a local chronicle, to *fen Mi*—"divide the Mi River"—is also mentioned.⁷⁷ *Mi* is the name of the river in which K'ü Yüan is said to have committed suicide. An account from An lu fu says that the boats fought to *to piao*—"to grasp the top branch"—or "flag".⁷⁸ It is difficult to say whether this expression is a description of some item of the ceremony or whether it just means to "take the prize".⁷⁹ Finally, a report from Wu ch'ang hien says

⁶⁹ II: 51, 5b.

⁷⁰ VI: 1259, *Ts'i miao* 2a; 1260, *Ku tsi* 2a, 4a.

⁷¹ II: 51, 19b.

⁷² II: 51, 19b.

⁷³ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

⁷⁴ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b, 2a.

⁷⁵ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a. A Sung source from the mountain regions west of Ch'ang te fu says: "One paddles to and fro, and wind and rain must come inevitably during a month." *K'i man ts'ung siao*, 11b, 12a.

⁷⁶ VI: 1225, *Pu yi wen* 2, 6a.

⁷⁷ VI: 1194, *Ts'i miao* 2, 1a.

⁷⁸ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 2a.

⁷⁹ Mathews 1960, no. 6433: 20.

that there was a term *fen tung si*—"to divide into east and west"—which may mean that the boats there, as in Ch'ang te fu, were paddled from north to south.⁸⁰

"To fight and cross over" was a ceremony in which different *tsu* groups contended against each other. This rivalry was manifested in an endeavour to paddle across the river from north to south in the shortest possible time. At the same time the crews of the boats attempted actively to hinder rival crews by throwing stones at them and striking them with canes. It may be that deliberate attempts were made to sink rival boats. The accounts suggest that the boats were paddled in twos, but it is not made clear whether the river was crossed several times with the boats paired off differently. There is nothing to indicate that the ceremony was carried out according to a definite code of rules. "Victors" are mentioned, but it is not clear whether one or several boats won the race.

We have seen that the spectators gave pieces of red and green silk as presents to the crew of a dragon boat when the boat passed its own region. According to the *Wu hing* system, red and green refer to the agents fire and wood respectively. Both these agents are in their turn related to the male *yang* principle. It is probable that the function of these presents was to demonstrate the value of the agnatic ties of kinship between the dead ancestors and the living members of a *tsu* group. Thus they provided information on the uniting descent, associated to *yang* by patrilineality.

We saw in Chapter III above that great rivalry existed between different *tsu* groups. One of the most important causes of this rivalry is said to have been the strong sense of unity between agnatic relatives in order to give the group as such prestige and influence. The question arises whether the ceremonial struggles between the *tsu* groups in Ch'ang te fu in "To fight and cross over" were a projection of the social rivalry on the ceremonial plane. I find it rather unlikely that the ceremony should have been principally an expression of such rivalry. It seems too closely allied to the production cycle to be merely an expression, sanctioned by the community, of latent tension and aggressions emanating from social competition. To me, however, it seems likely that the ridiculing of the losers at the end of the ceremony implied an expression of this aggression.

⁸⁰ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

Certain other customs mentioned in local chronicles must be observed at this point. At the feast held in the fifth month in Yüeh chou fu, *yin k'i*—"affinal relatives"—exchanged presents consisting of *küeh shu* dumplings, *p'u* reeds and *ai* plants.⁸¹ A statement from King chou hien says rather cryptically that *tsung* (i.e. *tsu* groups) were measured on the fifth day.⁸² In Han ch'uan hien the days before *Tuan wu* were a time of ceremonial activity between *yin kia*—"affinal families". It is said that people had a surfeit of *li*—"decorum"—, costumes, things and presents. The traditional name for this was *Chuei tsie*—"Giving back feast".⁸³ A notice from Sui yang hien, already mentioned, says that *ts'in* relatives and "friends" exchanged *küeh shu* dumpling and *yen tan*—"salted eggs"—as presents.⁸⁴ A rather more detailed piece of information is available from Ying shan hien. There the feast in the fifth month was called *Ho tsie*—"Sending presents feast". This name originated from the custom of *sü kia*—"families of sons-in-law"—to send presents of multi-coloured silk and fruit soup to the *nü kia*—"women families" who reciprocated in the same way. It is also said that the *san nü*—"scattered women"—of a district and those not yet *tsi*—"betrothed"—congregated on the *Wu* day, and apparently a few days earlier, to hold a drinking feast together.⁸⁵

Thus great activity between groups connected by marriage can be observed in conjunction with the festival period. Among the presents exchanged were *küeh shu* dumplings, which have earlier been interpreted as womb symbols. Salted eggs had the same symbolic significance. To me it seems plausible to assume that this exchange of women symbols told about, and was one way of demonstrating and confirming, the affinal ties of relationship. Multi-coloured silk cloth was also included among the presents. We have already seen that pieces of green and red silk were used to demonstrate agnatic relationship. "Multi-coloured" may mean "five-coloured", but that is naturally uncertain. Fruit soup is also mentioned, but I have been unable to find any information

⁸¹ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2ab.

⁸² VI: 1193, *Feng su* 2a.

⁸³ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 2a.

⁸⁴ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4b.

⁸⁵ VI: 1166, *Feng su* 4b; II: 51, 18b. In the latter place this information has been assigned to Te an fu. Cf. also Feng Han-yi 1937, 262. Further, a Sung statement from the mountain regions west of Ch'ang te fu says that men and women did not dare to remain together during "To fight and cross over"; *K'i man ts'ung siao*, 12a.

elucidating its symbolic value or its function in ceremonial situations. In Yüé chou fu, *ai* plants (*Artemisia*?) and *p'u* reeds were sent as presents, as well as *küé shu*. It is said earlier in the same account that *ai* was picked and *p'u* cut to drive away *shen* spirits, that is, these plants had a definite driving-away and averting power. Thus it would seem as if the affinal relationships implied or included something negative that had to be driven away. If the above-mentioned silk cloth was five-coloured, it would fit well into this pattern, for the combination of five colours was associated with both productive ability (like the *küé shu*) and driving-away power (like the *ai* and *p'u*). Unfortunately, my material does not contain any information on exactly in which direction which presents were sent. The term "Giving back feast" seems to imply direction from the bride-taking group to the bride-giving group.

Thus we have seen that the bride-giving and bride-taking groups exchanged presents in conjunction with the dragon boat feast. The account from Ying shan hien also suggests that the women of a group married into other groups returned to their original homes to join their agnatic relatives in their own *tsu* group. It may be that the rather obscure statement from King chou fu that the *tsung* groups were "measured" refers to this gathering of the lineages. It is obvious that there existed a division into bride-giving and bride-taking categories during the festival. Since the marriage groups were the same as the ceremonial groups in "To fight and cross over", there is reason to assume that the struggles between the boats of the *tsu* groups were in some way concerned with relations between bride-giving and bride-taking.

We have already seen that the dragon boat festival took place after the rice had been transplanted, and my study is based on the theory that the ceremonies should be regarded as the symbolic aspect of the transplantation of the rice. In the hypothesis I now wish to advance, my starting point will be that this period must have been an important phase in the development of the transplanted rice plants. No doubt it was considered that the rice plants were then exposed to different influences of both a positive and negative nature. Thus on the Hupeh plain during the sixth century, the fifth month was considered to be especially dominated by evil influence, and there were consequently many "prohibitions and evasions" there.⁸⁶ The positive influence on a *tsu* group's rice fields emanated from the dead ancestors of the group, who had come from the regions of the setting sun on the Jo water by

⁸⁶ King Ch'u sui shi ki, 11a.

dragon boat to their living posterity. Their influence was undoubtedly connected with "growing power", to which we will return later. When these forefathers returned to their home villages, they found the whole *tsu* group, including the women married to members of other *tsu*, congregated there. At the same time, the women married into the *tsu* group had returned to their original home villages. This was no doubt equally important. No members of another *tsu* group were allowed during the visit of the ancestors—it is mentioned in Chapter III above that all outsiders were expelled from the boat regions during the feast. Just as the positive influence was imagined to emanate from the group itself, the negative influence was supposed to come from outside the group. Earlier in this chapter it was mentioned that it seemed as if the affinal relationships implied or included something negative, which had to be repelled.

Starting from this indication, it seems to me that the external negative influence came from the female influence on the group in the form of women married into the group, or rather the forefathers of the *tsu* group or groups from which the women came. These "negative ancestors" were probably called *yin ping*—"the [female, negative] *yin* principle soldiers". It was these *yin ping* that were driven away by the dragon boat ceremony. Before "To fight and cross over" was performed, the *wu* sorcerer made an "art with the hands", called *Si yin ping*—"To pacify the *yin* soldiers". The struggle between the dragon boats was another, and probably the most effective, way of combating *yin ping* and thereby the negative influence on the rice fields.

It is natural in this connection to consider the division of labour between men and women in the transplanting of the rice. It is difficult to find information about this, for the Chinese, obvious situation. I have found only one account, from King an hien, saying that the women transplanted the rice plants, while the men beat time on drums.⁸⁷ This seems to have been mentioned because it was something out of the ordinary.⁸⁸ No conclusions can be drawn from this one piece of information.

⁸⁷ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 3a.

⁸⁸ It is said that transplanting rice was mostly done by men in the Lower Yang tai Plain. Women helped in another way: "When the fields are ready women repair to the nurseries . . . , to pull the rice plants. Carefully rinsing the soil from the roots, they tie them into bundles of a size easily handled in transplanting, which are then distributed in the fields." King 1926, 255.

The struggle between the boats was mainly a struggle between the ancestors of the different *tsu* groups, although the living members did their bit by throwing stones from the river banks. The dead ancestors of a *tsu* group were apparently those best fitted to drive away the malevolent dead of the bride-givers. Unfortunately, no information throwing light on this is forthcoming. It may be that the dead ancestors were supposed to possess special experience and insight, inaccessible to living people. But nothing is known with certainty about this.

The descriptive material is too vague to allow any definite conclusions to be drawn from the information given about the crossing over. This uncertainty has been mentioned earlier in this work. Statements from Ch'ang te fu and Yüe chou fu that the ceremony was *jang* against calamities are in good agreement with my hypothesis. The same applies to what is said in the poem *Yüe chou kuan king tu*: "Side by side they drive away". In Yüe chou fu, however, it was supposed that the ceremony was *jang* against disease. It may be that disease was one aspect of *yin ping*'s negative influence. In this connection it is convenient to consider what was said in Chapter VI about the five-coloured threads used at *Tuan wu*. *King Ch'u sui shi ki* tells that these threads were called *P'i ping*—"drive away soldiers"—on the Hupeh plain in the sixth century, and that their purpose was to drive away disease. *Ping* here is undoubtedly the same as *yin ping*. Later accounts from An lu fu and T'ung shan hien say that they were intended to drive away negative influence, and to "avert demon calamity". In these cases, too, it is probable that disease-bringing *yin ping* were to be driven away.

It must be observed in this connection that Chao Wei-pang, in his comments on *Wu ling king tu lüe*, has endeavoured to show that the five-coloured threads were related to the dead. "This kind of thread is closely connected with the soul of the dead, probably a symbol of it. To illustrate this point we had better take some evidence from the Miao tribe, who formerly lived in South Hunan. When a Hei-miao has died, a coloured thread is tied up on the top of a bamboo stick which is erected in front of the tomb; men and women made offerings to it. When a Kuo-ch'uan Ch'i-lao is sick, a five coloured thread is bound up on a tiger's bone, which is put in a winnowing fan, and a sorcerer is invited to pray for him. In Sung Yü's Calling Back the Soul it is also said that a bamboo basket and a thread was used to call back the soul. According to Kiang Chi's commentary on the Ch'u Tz'u, the

thread is in five colours.”⁸⁹ Chao Wei-pang’s reasoning seems rather vague to me. None of the three examples provide any certain evidence that we are concerned with a soul symbol. It also seems methodologically unsatisfactory to compare information from two different aboriginal tribes with *Han* Chinese material without first obtaining a rather clear picture of the cultural and social backgrounds of these non-Chinese peoples. Before comparisons are made, we must be sure that we are concerned with comparable magnitudes.

If we return to the discussion of *yin ping*, we find that the soldier pots, *ping kuan*, mentioned above, should have been related in some way to *yin ping*. With reference to my earlier hypothesis I suggest the following explanation of the name of the pots, and at the same time an explanation of the custom of sinking them into the river immediately before “To fight and cross over”. I again refer to the view that the ceremonies of the dragon boat festival were the symbolic aspect of the transplantation of rice. The assumption that soldier pots, bamboo tubes and *tsung* or *küe shu* were three forms of a womb symbol has been made earlier. I found it probable that the pot/womb symbol contained male (beans) and female (rice) substances. I should like now to go even further and suggest that these two substances were associated with the “soul” conceptions, *hun* and *p’o*, which in their turn were related to the *yang* and *yin* principles respectively. In my opinion, this pot may be regarded as a womb in the act of bearing rice, and the compound symbol stood for all the rice plants belonging to a *tsu* group. The rice was conceived as a living creature with *hun* and *p’o*. Thus the ancestors planted the rice before the “To fight and cross over” ceremony was performed. In the same way as the young rice plants were set under water, they sank the rice wombs, pregnant with *hun* and *p’o* animated rice, into the water. I assumed earlier that the rice, after the delicate process of transplantation, was supposed to be subjected to many negative influences in the form of *yin ping*—dead ancestors of *tsu* groups with which the group had affinal ties of relationship. The planted pot/rice womb was probably exposed to attacks from these *yin ping*. The name of the pot may possibly be derived from such a situation. The peach amulets thrown into the water at the same time no doubt had protective and averting properties.

We must now return to the story of Ou Huei. To me it seems likely

⁸⁹ Chao Wei-pang 1943, 10.

that this story is the verbal expression of the situation I described above. The story says that bamboo tubes full of rice (rice womb symbols) were sunk into the water, and that they were stolen by malevolent *kiao lung* dragons (no doubt another form of *yin ping*), and to provide protection from these dragons, *lien* plants, and the driving-away five-colour combination were attached to the tubes.

Yang Sī ch'ang says that "To fight and cross over" was *pu* prediction of the harvest. This statement is probably connected with the driving away of the negative influence from the rice fields. Yang Sī ch'ang also quotes a fragment of a folk song in which it said that "If the multi-coloured boat *ying*—'gets surplus'—the season's crop is obtained." He says that this is an isolated phrase without any context, and of unknown origin. Thus it seems as if the multi-coloured boat with its five colours was considered—in agreement with what we have earlier found probable. i.e. that the combination of five colours was associated with both destructive and productive power—to be especially fitted to drive away *yin ping* influence, and at the same time have a positive effect on the growing rice. If the phrase referred to all the *tsu* groups, it is reasonable to suppose that it would have been best for all concerned if the multi-coloured boat won. Thus one might think that the multi-coloured boat was intended to win. Since it is by no means clear what "winning" meant, and since the material is so scanty altogether, we must be satisfied to bear this possibility in mind.

We saw in Chapter VI that the colours of the dragon boats were probably associated with *Wu hing*—"the five agents". It has been mentioned in this chapter, too, that the five agents were arranged in two different cycles, one based on the fact that they created each other in a certain order, and the other that they destroyed each other in another order. There is a possibility that the struggle between the dragon boats in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony told of these two processes and their effect in connection with the cultivation of rice. The destructive process eliminated negative influence on the fields, and the productive process encouraged the growth of the young rice plants. The whole ceremony may have been conceived as a five-colour symbol, in which case we are concerned with yet another example of the ambiguity of this symbol. This does not contradict anything in the earlier discussion. It was in the interest of the whole community that the "To fight and cross over" ceremony was performed when the rice was transplanted. The ceremony as a whole drove away negative in-

fluence and encouraged positive. To me it seems feasible to assume that it was in the light of this communal interest that the officials appeared in conjunction with the ceremonial activity. It reminds one of what was said in Chapter II above, about the five agents being associated with the seasons of the year. Since there are only four seasons, the agent earth, being related to the centre of the compass, was conceived as controlling, from its central position, the four seasons and helping to guide the course of year. We have also seen that no yellow boat participated in the struggle between the dragon boats. On the other hand, there was a story explaining why no yellow dragon boat was used. The story had clearly the function to fill this lacuna in the ceremonial structure. It may be that the agent earth and the yellow colour were associated with the imperial political administration—yellow has generally been related to the imperial family. It is possible that the officials took part in the ceremony as representatives of the imperial power and the agent earth. In association with the agent earth they had a controlling function and the task of helping to guide the other activities. Their actions in connection with the ceremony, rewards and gifts on the one hand and whipping on the other, might have been manifestations of their tasks as controllers.

It was in the interest of a particular *tsu* group that its own boat won, for that would have a positive effect only on this group's rice production. The struggle may perhaps also be regarded as a status demonstration, in which the bride-taking groups showed, or attempted to show, their superiority over the bride-giving groups. The association of the ceremony in Ch'ang te fu with a wish for children, and with pregnancy in Yu hien may have been due to the productive ability of the five-colour symbol of the whole ceremony. The lack of material, mentioned previously, prevents any definite conclusions. So we must be content with these sketchy hypotheses.

A custom observed in Yün meng hien has been reported in Chapter VI. On *Tuan wu* day, *han lung*—"dry weather dragons"—were made there of bamboo and thin, five-coloured silk laid on like scales. These dragons were placed on the roofs of towers and high pavilions.⁹⁰ The name of these dragons suggests that they counteracted drought and produced rain, which was normal and desirable at this time of the year, when the rice fields were dependent to a certain extent on rain.

⁹⁰ II: 51, 19a.

Their position on roofs may be taken to mean that they served as a kind of landmark for "real" *lung*. At the same locality the custom "to welcome the boat", also mentioned above, was observed. A group of "water hands", dressed in beautiful costumes, appeared with drums, gongs, pan-pipes, clapping boards and pennants. The chronicler says that "they cross the river and guide the wandering *lung* dragons".⁹¹ In Ch'ang te fu, before "To fight and cross over" was performed, the *wu* sorcerer made an "art with the hands", called "to gather the going-before *lung* dragons". The *lung* dragons clearly preceded the dragon boat when, with its crew of dead ancestors, it was paddled on the Jo water. The same conception was also found in Yün meng hien. The wandering *lung* arrived there at the same time as the dragon boat, as is implied by the fact that the custom of showing them the way was called "To welcome the boat". In Ch'ang te fu, the flags of the dragon boats, which served as landmarks for the *shen* spirits, had *lung* dragon figures on them. Perhaps the flags, too, were landmarks to guide the *lung* dragons. There is a possibility that the dragon boats, which seem really to have been *lung* dragons with death and underground associations, were also related to their power of producing rain. The wandering *lung* are mentioned as separated from the dragon boats, however. In analogy with the discussion of the dry-weather dragons in Yün meng hien, it might also be said that the dragon boat was not only a dragon itself, but also a landmark for other dragons.

When the ancestors arrived in the world of the living in their dragon boat, they were preceded by *lung* dragons, probably guided by the ancestors. It is feasible that the rapid progress of the dragon boats on the river was also a method of guiding *lung*. When *lung* were gathered together and led symbolically, it may have implied that they were guided to the rice fields. A notice from Yüeh chou fu is interesting in this connection. It is said, in conjunction with the customs observed during the fifth month, that "*lung* dragons give birth on the thirteenth day".⁹² This "giving birth to dragons" coincided in time with the "generation of rice". If the dragons were led to the rice fields to give birth there, this would seem to be an activity intended to infuse the rice fields with productive power. Leading *lung* dragons may, in any case, be viewed on the ecological background that the festival was held immediately prior to the expected and desired summer rains.

⁹¹ II: 51, 19a.

⁹² VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2b.

J. J. M. de Groot and others after him interpreted the boat race as a dramatic representation of dragons fighting in the heavens. Such dragon battles were intended to produce rain. I have found only one mention of a fight between *lung* dragons in my material from the Hupeh-Hunan plain. It is from Siang hiang hien. Twelve *li* from this place there was a stone called Lung mo shī—"Dragon Whetstone". It was a cliff in the midst of fields, and it was said to bear traces of dragon claws. It got its name from the belief that two *lung* dragons fought each other there and sharpened their horns on the cliff.⁹³ It is not said, however, whether this fight produced rain. The situation of the stone in the fields seems to imply that these *lung* lived in the rice fields. It is difficult for me to find any confirmation of de Groot's theory, therefore, at least as far as concerns the Hupeh-Hunan plain.

A piece of information from Yün meng hien, finally, is of interest in connection with "To fight and cross over". With reference to *Tuan wu* it is said: "Two persons have striven for victory for a month."⁹⁴ This seems to suggest some kind of ceremonial combat performed while the rice was being transplanted. The information is far too vague to be analyzed. It may be that this struggle, too, in connection with what has been said earlier, was concerned with the driving away of negative, female *yin ping* influence.

Yang Sī ch'ang mentions different ways of ridiculing those who had been defeated in the "To fight and cross over" ceremony. Among the articles sent to them were dogs. In the *Wu hing* system dogs are associated with the agent metal, and thereby with the *yin* principle. Tortoises were sent, too, and they are related to water, which is also a *yin* agent. *K'iong k'iong* is a *Cnidium*, and bears small white flowers. The colour of the flowers may have caused this plant to be related to the agent metal. We are not told what fruit was sent. It seems reasonable to regard dogs and tortoises as *yin* symbols—perhaps they stood for *yin ping*—and their being hung up or sent as presents told about the activity of the negative influences. The losing groups must have felt "driven away" and the *yin* symbols apparently actualized this feeling. One function of these things in Yang Sī ch'ang's days was to ridicule the losers. The word *kou*—"dog"—applied to people had a derogatory meaning, for example. At least since Yüan times, the word *kuei*—

⁹³ VI: 1203, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 10a.

⁹⁴ II: 51, 19a.

“tortoise”—has been used similarly.⁹⁵ To me it does not seem impossible that the derogatory meanings of these words were connected in some way with their associations in the *Wu hing* system. Multi-coloured, probably five-coloured, ribbons were hung up to celebrate the victors. These symbols most likely told about the successful productive and driving-away, positive influences.

The termination of the dragon boat festival was called *Sung piao* in Ch'ang te fu. The basic meaning of the word *piao* is “highest branch” of a tree. Several secondary meanings have been derived from that: mark, beacon, signal, flag, pennant, and others. Thus *piao* implies some kind of landmark. *Sung piao* may be translated “To escort and guide (by means of signals, flags etc.)”. This custom seems undoubtedly to have told about how the vessels of the ancestors were escorted when they returned from the land of the living to the regions of death. This assumption is confirmed by a comparison with the termination of the festival in Yün meng hien—clearly on the sixth of the month. There it was called *Sung ch'uan*—“To escort the boat”. It is said in a local chronicle that “as in the earlier custom of leading (i.e. welcoming the boat), people walk along the banks and make reed torches and light them. This is called ‘To escort the boat’.”⁹⁶ The torches in this case clearly acted as beacons when the vessel of the ancestors was sent on its way. *Sung piao* took place in Ch'ang te fu on the eighteenth of the month. A couple of notices tell of some customs observed at the same time in two other places on the Hupeh-Hunan plain. On the same day a *mao ch'uan*—“water mallow boat”—was drawn through the streets of Wu ch'ang hien. A procession with the *miao shen*—“temple spirit”—of the Wen sī miao—“The Temple of the Disease Controller” was arranged. This custom was called *Chu yi*—“Drive away disease”.⁹⁷ The same day was called *Sung wen jī*—“Escort Diseases day”—in Ta ye hien. A large paper boat was made, with ten figures and “things”. One of these figures represented San lu ta fu, that is to say, K'ü Yüan. The figures wore multi-coloured costumes, and painted caps and girdles. Silver and pewter were placed in the paper boat and people escorted it to a place called Ts'ing lung

⁹⁵ Tortoises, it is said, were often painted on walls. The meaning was that those who did mischief were no better than tortoises. It is not certain whether this custom existed in Hupeh and Hunan. Giles, H.A. 1912, Nos. 6141, 6421.

⁹⁶ II: 51, 19a.

⁹⁷ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 2b.

t'i—"Green Dragon Pond"—clearly by a watercourse, where the boat was burnt.⁹⁸ In Kuang tsi hien, finally, *tsi* sacrifices were made to Wen shen—"Spirit of Disease"—and a feast was held. *Tsiao jang* sacrifices were made, *ts'ang shu* plants (*Atractylis lancea*) were burnt, and peach leaves were "stuck in".⁹⁹

Specks, boils and immature death were cursed at *Sung piao* in Ch'ang te fu, that is to say, endeavours were made to get rid of diseases. In Wu ch'ang hien, diseases were driven away when the "water mallow boat" was drawn through the streets, and another disease-expelling procession was made. In Ta ye hien the day of the paper boat ceremony was called "to Escort Diseases day". The Spirit of Disease was observed in Kuang tsi hien. To me it seems probable that the boat processions in these places told about the return of the ancestors' vessels to the regions of death. The multi-coloured painted figures in Ta ye hien may have represented the ancestors in the boat.¹⁰⁰ The K'ü Yüan symbol will be discussed in the next chapter. It is apparent that in these three places the eighteenth day was not only associated with the departure of the ancestors, as in three cases, but also with the driving away of illnesses. In connection with my earlier discussion, in which it was maintained that the ancestors, when they arrived in the world of the living, led and guided the *lung* dragons, it seems reasonable to assume that on their departure they led away the influences causing disease, perhaps the disease-producing *yin ping* remaining after the fight between the boats. Such a situation would explain the term *Sung piao*, the meaning of which, "to escort and guide", would refer to the fact that the boat departing with the ancestors was escorted, and that diseases were led away by the ancestors at the same time. The terms used in the material seem to imply that the living people also helped by "driving away".

"Parting presents" in the form of tea, rice, paper money and real money were given to the ancestors before the termination ceremony in Yün meng hien. This was done in the granaries.¹⁰¹ When, in Ch'ang te fu, meat, wine and paper money were burnt and thrown into the

⁹⁸ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6a.

⁹⁹ VI: 1178, *Feng su* 3b.

¹⁰⁰ In this connection a comparison may be made with the information given in Chapter VI that "spirit boats" were made in Huang chou fu on the *Wu* day.

"Spirit figures were tied to them." VI: 1178, *Feng su* 1b.

¹⁰¹ II: 51, 19a.

, water, they were undoubtedly conceived as "parting presents" to the departing ancestors. In the same way the silver and pewter used in Ta ye hien were probably presents to the ancestor figures in the paper boat.

In Ch'ang te fu the dragon boats returned "in secrecy" without flags and drum music after the *Sung piao* ceremony. This was probably meant to indicate that they were not there any longer, but had set out on their voyage to the region of the dead.

An endeavour has been made in this chapter to analyze the "To fight and cross over" ceremony, and some hypotheses have been proposed, in which I have tried to combine the various isolated pieces of information into a system. We have seen that, in Ch'ang te fu before the time of Yang Sī ch'ang, the essayist, officials took part in the ceremony, not only as spectators, but also actively. Before the race began these officials were visited by the *t'ou* functionaries on the dragon boats, who, with genuflection and bows, and by knocking their heads on the floor, demonstrated the higher status of the officials. The latter responded by giving presents, but if the boatmen showed negligence the officials further stressed their higher status by whipping the negligent *t'ou*. I assumed that the appearance of the officials at the festival was due to the circumstance that the dragon boat ceremony benefited the whole community. Apart from this, and in view of the lack of earlier studies, I have not ventured to draw any conclusions. Further investigation into the symbolic aspect of the local administration should be a stimulating task for future research.

Immediately prior to the beginning of the boat fight, "peach amulets" and "soldier pots" were thrown into the water. The peach was supposed to have had driving away power, as Yang sī ch'ang says, but we have seen that it was also associated with longevity and productive power. The "soldier pots" were so named because they were connected in some way with the dead ancestors of other *tsu* groups, who were called "yin principle soldiers". I assumed that such a pot was conceived as a rice womb pregnant with *hun* and *p'o* animated rice. Variations on this theme were *küe shu* dumplings, also called *tsung*, and bamboo tubes. These bamboo tubes were mentioned in a story about a man named Ou Huei, whom K'ü Yüan taught to tie five-coloured ribbons round the tubes to protect them from *kiao lung* dragons. The contents of the story seem to tell that the womb tubes (or, as in the ceremony, the pots) thrown into the water were attacked

by negative *yin* influences. The crews of the dragon boats were dead ancestors, and the custom of sinking rice womb pots into the river told how the ancestors planted the rice, regarded collectively, under the water in the same way as living people plant rice plants under water.

Food was supplied to the crews of the large dragon boats by special small boats during the ceremony. It seems probable that these small boats may be regarded as a kind of sacrificial altar, on which to make sacrifices of food to the dead ancestors.

It was also shown that, in connection with the dragon boat festival, there was great activity between *tsu* groups related to each other by marriage. One notice says that women married into the group returned to their original homes during the festival. This means that all the members of a lineage group were gathered in their home village, and that no outsiders representing other lineages were present in the district. It is obvious that the division of *tsu* groups into bride-giving and bride-taking categories was important in connection with the festival. The starting points of my proposed analysis were that ceremonial groups during "To fight and cross over" were indetical with the marriage groups, and that the ceremony had bearing on the transplanting of the rice. I advanced the view that the positive influences on the rice fields of a *tsu* group emanated from the ancestors of the group, who also transplanted the rice symbolically. The negative influence came from other groups, by way of the foreign influence on which the exogamous group was dependent in the form of women married into the group. The patrilineal descent was stressed strongly and was the uniting factor in the *tsu* group, which experienced the actual dependence on women from outside, and thereby other *tsu* groups as a conflict. The affinal ties of kinship were associated with the female and negative *yin* principle. The fight between the boats was a struggle between the ancestors of different *tsu* groups, and the negative influence on the fields was probably conceived as coming from the ancestors of affinal relatives; these ancestors were called *yin ping*. If my theory is correct, the purpose of the struggle was to drive away these negative ancestors and destroy their influence on the rice fields. Thus the ceremony included a demonstration, or an attempted demonstration, of the superiority of the bride-taking group over the bride-giving group.

We also observed that the colours of the dragon boats were probably associated with the five agents. It has been shown in an earlier chapter that these agents both produced each other in a certain order and

destroyed each other in another order. We have seen, too, that the ordinary five-colour symbol had a double meaning, and was associated with both the productive and destructive forces. A feasible theory seems to me to be that the whole of the dragon boat ceremony was one huge five-colour symbol, in which the fighting part told of the destructive, driving-away power, but also referred to productive forces. Thus the ceremony did not only concern one particular group, but the whole community. The participation of the officials in the ceremony must be linked up with this communal interest. These officials may, in the ceremony, have been associated with the agent earth, which, from its central position, exercised control over the other four agents and their relationships.

The material seems to imply that the ancestors were accompanied by rain-producing dragons. It may be that they guided them to the rice fields. *Lung* dragons were supposed to give birth during these visits, and if this occurred in the rice fields the idea may have been that this dragon birth inspired the fields with productive power, since it coincided approximately with the time when the rice was "born".

On the day after the boat race, different articles were hung up to celebrate the victors and ridicule the losers. Multi-coloured, no doubt five-coloured, ribbons referred to the victors, and probably intimated that the ceremony/five-colour symbol had been successfully concluded and told of the positive influence on the production of rice. Dogs, tortoises, a *Cnidium* plant and fruit were assigned to the losers. Dogs and tortoises at least were associated with the *yin* principle and these symbols probably told about the negative forces. They also served to actualize the feelings of inferiority of the defeated.

The dragon boat festival was concluded by escorting the dead ancestors, when, on the eighteenth of the fifth month, they started out on their voyage back to the regions of the dead. Farewell presents were given to them. When the forefathers set out, they took with them the remaining negative influences, at the same time as their living descendants, helped with driving-away actions. The festival ended with the departure of the ancestors.

VIII

Recalling K'ü Yüan

Yang Sī ch'ang begins his essay, *Wu ling king tu lüe*, by saying, "The custom of fighting and crossing over has its roots in the calling back of K'ü Yüan."¹ The ceremony was thus associated with the historically vague poet and minister in the Ch'u State during the rule of Huai Wang (328—299 B. C.). It is of minor importance in this connection whether K'ü Yüan ever existed or not.² According to a widely accepted Chinese view, "To fight and cross over" originated in the death of the minister. This has already been shown above as far as the Hupeh-Hunan plain is concerned. Sī ma Ts'ien's biography of K'ü Yüan³ tells that K'ü Yüan, after falling into disfavour with the king and being banished, committed suicide, by drowning himself in the Mi lo River in northwestern Hunan. Yang Sī ch'ang quotes *King Ch'u ki*, that is, *King Ch'u suei shī ki*, where in the commentary it is said with reference to "To fight and cross over" and the fifth of the fifth month that K'ü Yüan died that day, and that his death was mourned. And so people paddled out together to find him.⁴ According to the prevailing Chinese view, "To fight and cross over" was a ceremonial repetition of the search for the drowned K'ü Yüan.

Yang Sī ch'ang has taken another, more elaborated version from *Ti li chī*, the geographical section of *Suei shu*—"History of the Sui Dynasty". According to this work, compiled during the T'ang period, K'ü Yüan went to, that is, was drowned in, the Mi lo River on the full-moon day of the fifth month. The people of the region *chuei*—

¹ II: 51, 3a.

² See e.g. Eberhard 1942a, 321 and Hawkes 1959, 10 ff.

³ See Hawkes 1959, 11 ff.

⁴ II: 51, 5a; *King Ch'u suei shī ki*, 12a.



“followed”—him. They arrived at the Tung t'ing lake, but could not see him. The lake was large and the boats small, and it was impossible for them to cross over. Then they sang the following words: “With what can we cross the lake? Being as it is, let us, drumming and paddling, return fighting. Let us meet at the pavilion.”⁵

The K'ü Yüan tradition was kept alive all over the Hupeh-Hunan plain and temples and halls in honour of the Ch'u minister were common. There was a *ts'i* hall dedicated to K'ü Yüan in connection with a temple called Hüe p'an kung in Ch'ang te fu.⁶ A K'ü Yüan *ts'i* or San lu *ts'i* was to be found two *li* east of the town⁷ and outside the east wall on the river bank was a K'ü Yüan miao—“K'ü Yüan temple”.⁸ In Ch'ang sha fu there was a *ts'i* hall, where *si* sacrifices were made to K'ü Yüan and Kia Yi, a scholar living during the second century B.C.⁹ Sixty *li* north of Siang yin hien by the Mi (or Mi lo) River—in which K'ü Yüan was said to have committed suicide—there was a ruin of a K'ü Yüan temple where officials had made *tsi* sacrifices on the fifth of the fifth month.¹⁰ In the same town was a hall called San lu ta fu hing *ts'i*. This name may mean that it was subject to official inspection.¹¹ In Yi yang hien *si* sacrifices to K'ü Yüan were made in Lu hien *ts'i*—“Hall of the Six Virtues”.¹² Sixty *li* south of this town was a temple called Feng Huang miao—“Phoenix Temple”—where meat bouillon was *si* sacrificed to K'ü Yüan, who was here also called Feng Huang shen—“Phoenix Spirit”—after the temple.¹³ There was a temple named San lu ta fu miao sixty *li* south of Yüe chou fu.¹⁴ In P'ing Kiang hien, K'ü Yüan was associated with San hien *ts'i*—“Hall of the Three Virtues”.¹⁵ In the surroundings of Li chou, K'ü Yüan and his disciple Sung Yü shared a *ts'i* hall situated two *li* east of the town,¹⁶ and there was another K'ü Yüan hall at a

⁵ II: 51, 5a.

⁶ VI: 1259, *Ts'i miao* 1b, 2a.

⁷ VI: 1259, *Ts'i miao* 2a.

⁸ VI: 1210, *Ku tsi* 2a. This temple may be identical with the one mentioned in the previous note.

⁹ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 1b; 1213, *Ku tsi* 1b.

¹⁰ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 2b, 3a.

¹¹ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 3b. Cf. *Ts'i hai*, *Hing miao*.

¹² VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 5b.

¹³ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 5b; 1213, *Ku tsi* 11a.

¹⁴ VI: 1223, *Ts'i miao* 1b.

¹⁵ VI: 1223, *Ts'i miao* 2b.

¹⁶ VI: 1223, *Ts'i miao* 3a.

posting station called Lan kiang.¹⁷ At a probably taoist establishment called Kiang tu kuan in King chou fu there was a *kung* temple where *sī* sacrifices were made to K'ü Yüan.¹⁸ There was a San lu ts'ī seven *li* outside Kien li hien,¹⁹ and outside the east gate of Kuei chou was K'ü kung ts'ī—"Duke' K'ü's Hall". Another name for the same building was probably Ts'ing lie kung miao—"Temple of the Pure and Prominent 'Duke'".²⁰ Thirty *li* west of An lu fu were the ruins of a temple dedicated to the Ch'u minister, lying by the Han River.²¹ In Tang yang hien there was a building called Shuang chung ts'ī—"Hall of the Two Loyalties"—where *sī* sacrifices were made to two ministers in the ancient Ch'u State, Shen Pao sü and K'ü Yüan.²² In San chung ts'ī—"Hall of the Three Loyalties"—at Wu ch'ang fu, *sī* sacrifices were made to K'ü Yüan.²³ Finally, there was a San lu ta fu ts'ī in the vicinity of T'ung shan hien.²⁴

Outside the east gate of Ch'ang te fu was some kind of street called K'ü Yüan hiang—"K'ü Yüan Lane". A small river, San lu ho—"San lu River"—flowed close to this place. Yang Sī ch'ang assumes that these names had been given because K'ü Yüan had often walked there.²⁵ A chronicler, who also mentions a San lu kang—"K'ü Yüan Creek"—two *li* east of the town, is of the same opinion.²⁶ It is very likely that this creek was connected with San lu ho. Seventy *li* north of Siang yin hien by the mountain Yü sī shan was a pond called K'ü t'an—"K'ü Pond". It was believed that K'ü Yüan stayed there after he had been banished from court, and that it was there he wrote *Kiu shuei ko*—"The Nine Water Songs"—, that is, *Kiu ko* in the anthology *Ch'u ts'ī* which is traditionally attributed to him.²⁷ Another K'ü t'an sixty *li* north of the town is mentioned. In reality this pond seems to have been a creek in the Mi lo River. It was assumed that K'ü Yüan drowned himself there. The temple ruin mentioned above stood at that

¹⁷ VI: 1223, *Ts'ī miao* 3a.

¹⁸ VI: 1194, *Ts'ī miao* 2, 3b.

¹⁹ VI: 1193, *Ts'ī miao* 1, 3b.

²⁰ VI: 1193, *Ts'ī miao* 1, 5ab, 5b.

²¹ VI: 1142, *Ts'ī miao* 1b, 2a.

²² VI: 1142, *Ts'ī miao* 6b.

²³ VI: 1121, *Ts'ī miao* 2a.

²⁴ VI: 1121, *Ts'ī miao* 7b.

²⁵ II: 51, 5a. See also VI: 1260, *Ku tsi* 2a.

²⁶ VI: 1255, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 7a.

²⁷ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 9a.

place.²⁸ Tradition had it that K'ü Yüan had lived in the Phoenix temple in Yi yang hien mentioned earlier, and there had written his poem *T'ien wen*—"The Heavenly Questions"—included in *Ch'u ts'i*.²⁹ Another chronicler claims that K'ü Yüan, during his exile, lived in T'ai p'ing sī—"Hall of the Great Peace"—at Yüe chou fu.³⁰ South of Kuei chou fu was a gorge named Wu siang k'i, by which stood a memorial stone in memory of K'ü Yüan with an early sixteenth century inscription.³¹ A place called K'ü Yüan che—"K'ü Yüan's Dwelling"—is mentioned as lying sixty *li* northeast of the town,³² and a watercourse named K'ü Yüan t'o—"K'ü Yüan Branch"—was found fifty *li* to the east.³³ One of the songs in *Ch'u ts'i*, *Yü fu*—"The Fisherman"—, tells of a meeting between K'ü Yüan and a fisherman. The meeting ends by the fisherman going away singing a song beginning: "When the Ts'ang lang's waters are clear . . .". In Han yang fu³⁴ and Mien yang chou³⁵ a watercourse named Ts'ang lang shuei was associated with this story.

✓ K'ü Yüan's grave was on the Mi lo mountain by the Mi lo River, seventy *li* northeast of Siang yin hien. A stone with the inscription San lu ta fu mu—"Grave of San lu ta fu"—marked the spot.³⁶ A rather vague item of information from Ch'ang sha fu may mean that K'ü Yüan was believed to be buried outside the south gate of the town.³⁷

✓ It seems as if the Confucian officials chiefly emphasized K'ü Yüan's loyalty and honesty to his king. Respect for this paragon of virtue is manifested in the titles of honour given to him posthumously, such as *Chao ling hou*—"Illustrious Spirit Prince"—, *Chung kie hou*—"Pure Prince of Loyalty"—and *Ts'ing lie kung*—"Illustrious and Distinguished 'Duke'".³⁸ But on the Hupeh-Hunan plain there were apparently other conceptions of K'ü Yüan. We saw in the previous chapter how, in Ta ye hien on the eighteenth day of the fifth month, a paper dragon boat, several *chang* long, was made. This boat was equipped with ten or so

²⁸ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 10b.

²⁹ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 5b; 1213, *Ku tsi* 11a.

³⁰ VI: 1224, *Ku tsi* 2a.

³¹ VI: 1188, *Shan ch'uan* 2, 14a.

³² VI: 1196, *Ku tsi* 2, 8a.

³³ VI: 1196, *Ku tsi* 2, 7a.

³⁴ VI: 1130, *Ku tsi* 3a.

³⁵ VI: 1136, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 14a.

³⁶ VI: 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 9a; 1213, *Ku tsi* 17a.

³⁷ VI: 1213, *Ku tsi* 16b.

³⁸ VI: 1210, *Ts'i miao* 1, 2b, 3a; 1193, *Ts'i miao* 1, 5ab.

figures dressed in multi-coloured costumes and with painted caps, and one of them represented San lu ta fu. The boat was carried in a procession and burnt, and I assumed that this custom told of the departure of the ancestors from the world of the living.³⁹ In Yüing meng hien on the fifth of the fifth month it was said that "the loyal statesman K'ü Yüan is modelled in clay".⁴⁰ Unfortunately, no further information is given about this figure or its function. A document dating from Sung times, *Yi yüan*—"Anthology of Wonders"—describes the K'ü Yüan temple, mentioned above, sixty li north of Siang yin hien on the shore of Mi t'an, a creek of the Mi lo River. *Yi yüan* says: "It (i.e. the temple) is on the left bank of Mi t'an by a large rock. Hoof prints of horses are still preserved. Tradition has it that on the day K'ü Yüan threw himself into the water a noble white horse rose up and came."⁴¹ *T'u shu tsi ch'eng* quotes a document called *Shu tsiao*—"Document on Banana Leaves". It has been impossible for me to identify this source.⁴² The quotation runs: "In Kuei chou is the Yü mi t'ien—"Jade Rice Field". K'ü Yüan ploughed there and the field gave white rice, similar to jade. It is not generally known that K'ü Yüan ploughed fields."⁴³ Another and better known story about K'ü Yüan and a man named Ou Huei was discussed in Chapter VII above. Finally, it must be stressed that all the above information from the Hupeh-Hunan plain, except one item, emanates from the "basic" story told in the introduction to the present chapter, dealing with the death of the minister in the Mi lo River.

Yang Sī ch'ang says that the original meaning of the dragon boat ceremony was to "recall" K'ü Yüan. The author refers to a ceremony called *Chao hun*—"To recall *hun*". *Hun* is the designation of man's yang essence, his intellectual ability and vitality, as opposed to *p'o*, his form and biological functions, associated with the *yin* principle. "To recall *hun*" was a ceremony apparently common to all China. It was observed during feudal times, but is also mentioned in more recent times. When a person took ill or died, his *hun* was believed to leave him to wander about in foreign regions. On such occasions people

³⁹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 6a.

⁴⁰ II: 51, 19a.

⁴¹ VI: 1217, *Pu ki shi* 5a; 1202, *Shan ch'uan* 1, 10b.

⁴² The name "Document on Banana Leaves" reminds one that documents on vegetable material are common in the whole of southeastern Asia.

⁴³ VI: 1200, *Pu tsa lu* 3b.

climbed on to the roof, waved some article of clothing belonging to the sick or deceased person, and uttered loud cries. This was done in an attempt to guide back the *hun*.⁴⁴ Local variations probably occurred. Information from the Hupeh-Hunan plain defines the term *Chao hun*. It is said that it means "to climb on to the houses, appear elevated, turn the face to the north while shouting".⁴⁵ North is a *yin* point of the compass and is associated with femininity, passiveness and death, and the wandering *hun* was clearly to be guided back from this direction. Thus seeking for K'ü Yüan during the dragon boat festival implied calling back the drowned minister's *hun*.

A T'ang poet, Liu Yü si, active as an official in Ch'ang te fu for ten years or so,⁴⁶ says in a commentary on his poem *King tu k'ü*—"Song on 'To fight and cross over'"—that the crews shouted from the boats *Ho tsai*—"Where are you?" This was to recall K'ü Yüan.⁴⁷ Yang Sī ch'ang, quoting this, adds that in his own days this cry was no longer heard. In his essay he says further that when the boats at Ch'ang te fu were dispersed at sunset, people sang: "If he is there, let us return, if he is not there, let us return. Do not linger on the river bank. The cold wind is blowing."⁴⁸ This, too referred to K'ü Yüan.

Yang Sī ch'ang gives further information about the songs sung from the dragon boats in Ch'ang te fu, but he does not say during which part or parts of the ceremony the songs were sung. One thing is certain, however; these songs differed from the ordinary folk-songs sung in the region. Each *ch'ang* song consisted of four *sheng* phrases. The first phrases were closed by two added sounds—*ye, ye*. At the end of the last phrases came the sounds *a, o*. Yang Sī ch'ang also says that this way of singing the dragon boat songs was observed only in Ch'ang te fu. He also mentions that some people claimed that the final sounds were *so, so*.⁴⁹ This was said to refer to *Chao hun*, a song in *Ch'u ts'ü* in which *so* is added at the end of each verse. This song describes a ceremony performed at court in the Ch'u State to recall a *hun*. A very similar song in the same anthology, *Ta chao*, describes the same thing.

⁴⁴ For more detailed descriptions see e.g. Doré 1922, 465 ff., De Groot 1892, 241 ff. and Körner 1938, 108 ff.

⁴⁵ VI: 1213, *Ku tsü* 5b, 6a.

⁴⁶ Chao Wei-pang 1943, 5.

⁴⁷ II: 51, 4a.

⁴⁸ II: 51, 5a.

⁴⁹ II: 51, 4b, 5b.

The verses in this song end with a sound nowadays pronounced *chī*.

It is not very likely that the paddlers' songs were consciously modelled on the *Chao hun* song. We are undoubtedly concerned here with a speculation on the part of Yang Sī ch'ang, since the *Chao hun* is intimately associated with the K'ü Yüan tradition, for it is generally supposed to have been written by K'ü Yüan himself or his pupil Sung Yü. Still it seems to me that there is some connection between the songs sung by the paddlers and the *Chao hun*. While paddling the dragon boats the ceremony of recalling a *hun*, namely the *hun* of the drowned K'ü Yüan, was performed. The similarity of the paddlers' songs to *Chao hun* and *Ta chao* may be explained if the different songs are regarded as variations on a style of singing used in this ceremonial situation in the ancient Ch'u region in the Middle Yang tsī Valley that had survived in the variant of the ceremony forming part of "To fight and cross over".

The contents of the dragon boat songs, except for those mentioned above, were not concerned with K'ü Yüan at all, at least not during the time of Yang Sī ch'ang. A song was always begun with a conventional phrase to "represent the season". A specimen of such an introductory phrase is given: "The pomegranate tree is blooming and the leaves are green." The rest of the text of these songs was composed to ridicule the rival boats and their crews, and "singing contests" occurred between the boats. The contents of these specially composed phrases were so coarse that Yang Sī ch'ang felt unable to report them.⁵⁰ They may perhaps have had sexual implications. This would fit into my earlier theory that the ceremony actualized the bride-giving/bride-taking relationships and values connected with them.

We have seen earlier that there was a place called K'ü Yüan hiang outside the east gate of Ch'ang te fu, and on the bank of a river near the same town a K'ü Yüan temple. A small pavilion named Chao K'ü t'ing—"Pavilion for the recalling of K'ü"—stood in front of this temple.⁵¹ Yang Sī ch'ang mentions this pavilion and identifies it with the one in the story of K'ü Yüan in *Suei shu*. It is said there that people paddled down the Mi lo River to Lake Tung t'ing to seek the drowned K'ü Yüan. The search had to be discontinued and instead the seekers sang that they would paddle back fighting to "meet at the pavilion".

⁵⁰ II: 51, 4b, 5a.

⁵¹ II: 51, 5a.

This must be a literary speculation of Yang Sī ch'ang's.⁵² The name of the pavilion at Ch'ang te fu tells about its function, for it is said that "it is used to recall K'ü Yüan". My impression is that it was an official place for the calling back of K'ü Yüan's *hun*. Yang Sī ch'ang does not, it is true, make any mention of such an official recalling of K'ü Yüan during the dragon boat festival, but we have also seen earlier that officials had formerly participated actively in the festival ceremonies, but that this had been discontinued before Yang Sī ch'ang's time. An earlier official calling back of K'ü Yüan may also have been discontinued by that time. There is evidence that this was so from Ch'ang sha fu. A chronicler writes: "The place for the recalling of the *hun* of the banished eminence will be found outside the south gate of the capital of the prefecture, at Li ling p'o—'Control Spirit Shore'. The 'Duke' died and later prefects *yin si*—'led with gifts'—and *chao hun*—'recalled *hun*'—on the walls."⁵³ Thus it seems as if there was a recalling of K'ü Yüan ceremony from the boats on the river, and that there had earlier been an official recalling performed by the officials. In the first case it should have been, in analogy with the earlier discussion, an interest of the *tsu* group to call back K'ü Yüan, and in the second case an interest of the whole community.

On the Hupeh-Hunan plain "To fight and cross over" was associated with a story about a minister in the Ch'ü State, who, after falling out of favour with the king, committed suicide by drowning in the Mi lo River. The dragon boat ceremony was said to have originated in the search for the drowned minister by boat and recalling his *hun*. The cries from the boat show that this story is not loosely connected with the "To fight and cross over" ceremony as a rational explanation of a historical character, but that it is an integral part of the symbolism, that is, it tells in words what the ceremony says in symbolic actions. The ecological factors suggest that the context expressed symbolically was the important phase in the production of rice occurring at that time of the year, namely the transplantation of the rice plants. The essential thing in the K'ü Yüan tradition seems to me to be that, every year after the transplantation of rice, a drowned person's *hun* was called

⁵² When the *Chao hun* ceremony was performed in the province of Kueichou, a paper pavilion was used, among other things. This pavilion was to lead back *hun*. I have been unable to find similar information from the Hupeh-Hunan plain. Körner 1938, 109.

⁵³ VI: 1213, *Ku tsi* 16b.

back. Thus the ecological context suggests that the name K'ü Yüan connoted something concerned with rice, and I wish therefore to propound the following hypothesis. Young rice plants are transplanted in the large flooded fields under water, that is to say, they are "drowned". By this the rice, probably considered collectively, was thought to have lost its *hun*. To me it seems feasible that it was the *hun* of the rice that was recalled in order to restore the growing strength of the uprooted and transplanted rice plants. This renewing of the vital force was the concern of both the individual *tsu* group and the whole community.

It was shown in the previous chapter how a boat that had passed through a struggle victoriously was paddled backwards, stern first. The men on board held their paddles upright and danced for joy, beat gongs and played on wind instruments in the middle of the boat.⁵⁴ This custom may have been the leading back of the *hun* of the rice. It seems likely to me that the rapid progress of the boats over the river, from the north bank to the south bank, was one way of leading back the flying *hun*, which should have been in the north, in the *yin* and death regions, to the south and the regions of life. This leading was disturbed by attacks by negative *yin ping*, dead ancestors of foreign *tsu* groups, and these were driven away by fighting. When such an attack was repelled, the boat was paddled backwards to get in touch with the wandering *hun* again, and invite and escort it to the rice fields.

It is convenient here to return to two of the stories associated with K'ü Yüan. One of these is from *Yi yüan*, from Sung times, and it says that "on the day K'ü Yüan threw himself into the river, a noble white horse rose up ~~and came~~". It is difficult to place this statement in any context. On the eighteenth day of the first month, lanterns, paper boats and paper horses, which were later burnt on the banks of the river, were made in Kien li hien. They were *jang* sacrifices to ward off calamities.⁵⁵ White, and probably also paper, had associations with the metal category of the *Wu hing* system. The paper horse at Kien li hien was apparently connected with some kind of driving away. It is not easy to say whether the white horse in the story had a similar meaning. The statement seems obscure to me, and the character of *Yi yüan* as an anthology of curiosities demands great caution in the use of its information. The story from the "Document on Banana Leaves" is more interesting. The brief statement that K'ü Yüan appeared as a farmer and

⁵⁴ II: 51, 8a.

⁵⁵ VI: 1193, *Feng su* 4a.

ploughed the rice field connects the Ch'u minister directly with the production of rice, and this supports my earlier theory that K'ü Yüan was a name for rice.

Finally, it must be pointed out that the clay doll in Yün meng hien, representing K'ü Yüan, should, by the material from which it was made, have been associated with the centre of the compass and the agent earth. This manufacture of a clay doll is reminiscent of the use of clay figures at the *Li ch'un feast*—"Establishment of Spring"—in the beginning of February in Ch'ang te fu,⁵⁶ Yüe chou fu,⁵⁷ Han ch'uan hien,⁵⁸ An lu fu,⁵⁹ King shan hien,⁶⁰ Suei yang hien⁶¹ and Ying shan hien.⁶² This festival is clearly associated with agricultural production; but it is risky to draw any conclusions at present. The claim that one of the ancestor figures in Ta ye hien represented K'ü Yüan is difficult to understand on the basis of the earlier discussion.

In the previous chapter the question of why the dead ancestors were considered most fitted to drive away negative influence was discussed. The problem was raised again in conjunction with the recalling of K'ü Yüan. Now as before, it is impossible to give any plausible reasons for this circumstance. The material on which this study is based gives no information. Obviously one may assume that the dead had such experience as would be likely to make their recalling of the *hun* of the rice more successful than the same activity practised by the living. This experience may perhaps be related to the fact that they knew the regions of death personally, and were therefore fitted to find the wandering *hun* in those tracts. But no definite conclusions can be drawn. It must be remembered in this connection that when, in Yün meng hien, parting gifts were given to the "strangers" before they returned to the regions of death, the presentation of these gifts took place in the granaries.⁶³ This custom may perhaps be interpreted as expressing both the hopes of the living and the duties of the dead ancestors. In any case, it was a demonstration of a relationship between the ancestors and the crop to be harvested by their progeny.

⁵⁶ VI: 1259, *Feng su* 1b.

⁵⁷ VI: 1223, *Feng su* 2a.

⁵⁸ VI: 1130, *Feng su* 1b.

⁵⁹ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 1b.

⁶⁰ VI: 1142, *Feng su* 3a.

⁶¹ VI: 1120, *Feng su* 4a.

⁶² VI: 1166, *Feng su*, 3b, 4a.

⁶³ II: 51, 19a.

IX

Summary

The analysis of the Chinese dragon boat festival as it was celebrated on the Hupeh-Hunan plain attempted in this work is based on the information given in an essay dating from late Ming times, entitled *Wu ling king tu lüe*. The author of this essay, Yang Sī ch'ang describes in detail how the festival was celebrated in Ch'ang te fu, immediately west of Lake Tung t'ing in the province of Hunan. I have endeavoured to elucidate the information given in this text by comparative data from Ch'ang te fu itself and other places on the extensive plain in the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan in Central China. Thus the comparative material is from a relatively limited area, with uniform climate and geography. The ecological framework is thus largely the same for the places from which the information originates.

The dragon boat festival was held during a period of time beginning with the launching of the dragon boats on the first day of the fifth lunar month, and ending on the eighteenth of the same month. This was the rule in Ch'ang te fu and also in other places in the region studied. In the Chinese lunar calendar, the fifth month comes in the early summer, earliest at the end of May and latest at the end of June. Certain circumstances in production and the natural environment characterized this period. From about the middle of June to the middle of July is, in the Middle Yang tsī Valley, a period of very high humidity and great rainfall. The monsoon wind sweeps in over the region, which is exposed to hot tropical marine air. The festival period with which we are concerned apparently began prior to or perhaps at the beginning of this precipitation and temperature peak. We have also seen that summer rains do not always appear regularly, but drought years may alternate with floods.

The essential feature of production in the region studied was the cultivation of rice. This form of agriculture demanded a concentrated effort from about the end of April, when the rice was sown, to the end of May or beginning of June, when the young rice plants were transplanted in the large flooded fields. Then followed a period of relative idleness. To me it seems feasible that there must have been some connection between the dragon boat festival and the important phase in the production cycle, which consisted of the transplantation of rice around the end of May and beginning of June. As a rule, the dragon boat festival seems to have been celebrated after the transplantation process; people had hardly time to devote to the time-consuming ceremonies before that work was finished.

The activities connected with the different phases of the cultivation of rice must have been vested with value-creating meaningfulness. This was no doubt especially true of the important and delicate process of transplantation. My analysis is based on this circumstance, and in my interpretation the ceremonialism during the fifth month was the symbolic aspect of the transplantation of the rice, isolated in form, time and space. The climatological factors are naturally of interest, too. High temperatures and great rainfall favour the growth of the transplanted rice plants. In spite of the extensive irrigation systems, the cultivation of rice was still to a certain extent dependent on summer rain, and a dry season might cause serious damage.

4.2 The principal ceremony in the dragon boat festival was usually associated with the fifth of the fifth month. This day, by its repetition of the number five, must have been strongly associated with the agent earth in the *Wu hing* system. This day was also associated with the centre of the compass, and was probably conceived as a central point in the annual production cycle. Production followed the solar calendar, however, and the centre of this calendar is the summer solstice. The summer solstice was the pragmatic point for the completion of the transplantation of rice and the beginning of the summer rains. This point was observed ceremonially on *Tuan wu* day in the lunar calendar.

Each dragon boat had a number of boat regions, each inhabited by a number of segments of a lineage. Each dragon boat participating thus represented a certain lineage. The most important interlineage relationships were probably the links of marriage. Such a kin group was exogamous, and most of the women living in a village dominated by a lineage were outsiders in the sense that they had come from other

villages. It has been impossible to show that there were any definite marriage systems on the Hupeh-Hunan plain; as on the southeast coast, the women married into a lineage village probably came from many different places. The status of the bride-takers seems to have been higher than that of the bride-givers, at least on the Lower Yang tsī plain. The marriage grouping was identical with the ceremonial grouping in "To fight and cross over".

Most members of the crew of a dragon boat were probably members of the own lineage. Persons who, for one reason or another, refused to take part might be compelled to do so by the actualization of the agnatic ties of relationship by the help of a piece of red cloth. But there were also members of the crew employed specially for the occasion. They were from fisher families and had great experience of life on the water. The dragon boats also had five special functionaries. These five men were undoubtedly associated with the five agents of the *Wu hing* system, and at least four of them had to be members of the dragon boat's lineage.

Other people active in connection with "To fight and cross over" were *wu* sorcerers. The night before the ceremony, drums were beaten, and the sorcerer lighted a fire and "illuminated the boat" to guide the crew of the dragon boat, which really consisted of the dead ancestors of the lineage. The sorcerer had previously been given meat and wine to use as gifts of welcome. He also gave buckwheat to the ancestors, distributing it by walking along the boat from stem to stern scattering the grains. The sorcerer gave the members of the crew "lucky seals", and also endeavoured, by divination, to predict the success of the boat in the ceremonial contest. He performed "arts with the hands" concerned with lung dragons, "*yin* soldiers" and the *yin* and *yang* principles. When the boat was to be pushed off, the sorcerer performed actions telling how the ancestors sailed by dragon boat on the cosmic *Jo* water from the regions of the setting sun, and how they arrived in the world of the living.

The dragon boats were equipped with dragon heads, scales and tails, and were painted in different colours. They had different flags and uniforms for the crew, and were associated with "temple spirits". Two of the participating boats were painted in five colours. In this connection the five-colour combination was discussed, and it was said that the five colours were most likely the colours referring to the five agents of the *Wu hing* system. The five-colour symbol occurred within

the region studied in contexts relating to production and in situations in which negative influences were to be driven away. The same symbol could give different associations in different connections. An explanation of this was found in the general Chinese theory of agents. Together the five agents form two different cyclic systems, one based on creation in a certain sequence, and the other on destruction in another sequence. The five-colour symbol, which was associated with all five agents, probably told about this production and destruction. The one-coloured boats (with one exception) also seem to have been associated with definite agents.

The purpose of the flags used on board the dragon boats was to guide spirits and possibly dragons. It was impossible to analyse further the colour symbolism of the uniforms of the crews. The crews had "lucky seals" stuck in their hair by the temples; they were "things to drive away and defeat". Thus they brought luck as well as drove away, and it is clear that we are here concerned with a new ambiguity of a symbol.

The discussion of the "temple spirits" of the dragon boats showed that one common feature could be detected in them. They were all drivers-away, subjugators and associated with destructive power.

We also saw that the dragon boats, in addition to their connections with dead ancestors, had associations with the *yin* agents metal and water in the *Wu hing* system. They were also related to driving away power, directed at diseases and other calamities. The boats were also related to dragons, both by name and appearance. A survey of the material about *lung* dragons from the Hupeh-Hunan plain revealed that ponds, springs, rivers, lakes and rice fields were the favourite haunts of dragons, that is to say, they were mostly connected with water. They were also found in caves and ravines, that is, in places that should have had underground associations. Water and underground both have *yin* associations, and the *lung* dragons seem therefore mostly to have haunted "*yin* environments". To me it seems clear that the dead ancestors used *yin* principle dragons, that is, death and underground dragons as vessels. By their colour, these dragons had, over and above their *yin* nature, connections with one or all of the five agents.

Before the time of Yang Sī ch'ang, the author of the essay, officials took part in the ceremony, not merely as spectators, but actively. The chief functionaries on the dragon boats paid visits to them in special buildings along the water before the "To fight and cross over" cere-

mony began, and, by genuflection, bows and knocking their heads on the floor, demonstrated the higher status of the officials. The latter responded by giving presents or, if the boatmen were tardy to pay homage, by whippings. I assumed that the actions of the officials during the ceremony were connected with the fact that it was something that benefited the whole community.

Immediately before the commencement of the ceremony, "peach amulets" and "soldier pots" were thrown into the water from the boats. The peach was thought to have driving away power, but was probably also associated with longevity and productive power. The soldier pots had got their name because they were in some way related to the dead ancestors of foreign lineages, who were called "yin principle soldiers". I assumed that such a pot was conceived as a rice womb, pregnant with *hun* and *p'o* animated rice. Variations on this theme were a kind of dumpling and bamboo tubes. Bamboo tubes are mentioned in a story about a man named Ou Huei, who learned from the dead K'ü Yüan how to protect these tubes from malevolent *kiao lung* dragons by tying five-coloured ribbons to them. The contents of the story seem to relate that the womb tubes (or pots) thrown into the water were attacked by negative *yin* influences. The crews of the dragon boats were conceived as dead ancestors, and the custom of throwing rice womb pots into the water told how the ancestors planted the rice, considered collectively, under water in the same way as when living people planted rice plants under water.

During the ceremony, special small boats out on the river carried food to the crews of the dragon boats. These small boats may probably be regarded as sacrificial altars, on which sacrifices of food were made to the ancestors.

We also observed that, in connection with the dragon boat festival, there was much activity between lineages related to each other by marriage. Women married into other lineages returned to their home village during the festival. This meant that all the members of a lineage were congregated in their home village, and that no outsiders representing other lineages were to be found in the region. It is clear that the division into bride-giving and bride-taking categories was important in conjunction with the festival. The starting-points of my analysis were that the ceremonial groups during "To fight and cross over" were identical with the marriage groups, and that the ceremony was associated with the transplantation of rice. I maintained that the influence acting positively

on a group's rice field came from the ancestors of the group, who also transplanted the rice symbolically. Negative influence emanated from other groups, by way of foreign influence on the exogamous group in the form of women married into the group. The patrilineal descent was stressed strongly and the members of a lineage most likely experienced the factual dependence on women from outside, and thereby other lineages, as a conflict situation. The affinal links of relationship were associated with the female and negative *yin* principle. The struggle was between the ancestors of different lineages, and the negative influence on the fields ought then to have come from the ancestors of the lineages with which links of marriage had been established. The purpose of the struggle was to drive away these ancestors and their negative influence on the rice fields. The ceremony also included a demonstration or an attempted demonstration of the superiority of the bride-taking group to the bride-giving.

Starting from the probability, mentioned earlier, that the colours of the dragon boats referred to the agents of the *Wu hing* system, it seemed reasonable to regard the whole dragon boat ceremony as one great five-colour symbol, associated with both productive and destructive power. On the basis of this theory, the ceremony was not the concern of one individual lineage only, but the concern of the whole community and the participation of the officials in the ceremony should be connected with this communal interest. The officials may, as participators in the ceremony, have been associated with the agent earth, which, from its position in the centre, exerted a controlling influence on the other four activities and their relationships.

It seems as if the ancestors, when they arrived, led rain-producing *lung* dragons, and perhaps guided them to the rice fields. These dragons were believed to give birth during this visit, and if this took place in the rice fields it may also have been one way of infusing the fields with productive power.

The day after "To fight and cross over", different things were hung up in order to celebrate the victors and ridicule the losers. Multi-coloured, no doubt five-coloured, ribbons were assigned to the victors; they probably referred to the successfully completed ceremony/five-colour symbol, and told of its positive influence on the rice fields. Dogs, tortoises, fruit and a kind of plant were assigned to the losers. Dogs and tortoises at least were symbols associated with the *yin* principle, and

probably told about the doings of the negative powers. They also served to actualize the losers' feelings of inferiority.

The dragon boat festival was ended by the escorting of the ancestors when, on the eighteenth day of the fifth month they started on their return voyage to the regions of death. Various parting gifts were given them then. When the ancestors left they took with them the remaining negative influences, while the living people helped by driving away actions.

"To fight and cross over" originated, according to a common Chinese conception, in the suicide of a Ch'u State minister, K'ü Yüan, by drowning in a river in northeastern Hunan, and was a ceremonial repetition of a search for the drowned K'ü Yüan. Yang Sī ch'ang, the essayist, maintains that the origin of the dragon boat ceremony was to "recall K'ü Yüan", and refers to a ceremony performed at death and illness during which, from a high point, attempts were made to recall the vitality of the dead or sick person. The material suggests that such a recalling really was performed from the boats on the river. It also seems as if there had earlier been an official recalling of K'ü Yüan by public functionaries. There should have been, in analogy with the struggle between the boats, an interest for the individual lineages to do this "recalling", and also an interest for the whole community.

The ecological context suggests that the name K'ü Yüan was related to rice in some way or other. When transplanted, the young rice plants are planted under water in the flooded fields. Obviously the rice, probably conceived collectively, was considered to be drowned in the same way as a person drowned, and had thereby lost its *hun*, that is, its vitality and vegetative power. It was no doubt the rice's *hun* that was recalled in order to renew the vegetative power of the uprooted and transplanted rice plants. This must have been in the interest of both the individual lineages and the whole community.

The representation of K'ü Yüan in the form of a clay figure suggests a relationship between him (and thereby rice) and the agent earth in the *Wu hing* system.

The dragon boat festival, as it was celebrated on the Hupeh-Hunan plain, thus told of the activities of dead ancestors in connection with the transplantation of rice. The ancestors of a lineage travelled from the regions of the setting sun on the cosmic Jo water by dragon boat to the land of the living. They brought with them the rain-producing *lung* dragons. When they arrived at their former home village they

found all the living members of their lineage, but no outsiders there. On their arrival, the dead were given gifts of food by the living. During their visit the ancestors transplanted the rice, and struggled against and drove away the ancestors of foreign lineages. The latter belonged to the lineages from which women were received in marriage and exerted negative influence on the production of rice. They were also believed to cause illness and other calamities. The guided *lung* dragons were associated with the summer rains. The transplanted rice was regarded as being in the same condition as a drowned person. It had, when planted under water, lost its *hun*, a kind of soul related to vitality. The dead ancestors restored the vegetative power of the rice by recalling the fleeing *hun*. When transplantation was completed, and with it the driving away of negative influences and the recalling of the *hun*, the ancestors returned to the world of the dead in their dragon boats. They received parting gifts and led away the remaining negative influence.

Numerous references have been made in this study to the five agents of the *Wu hing* system, and to the *yin* and *yang* principles. An attempt is made below to present in table form the categories that probably gave the dragon boat festival its structure.

In this study of the dragon boat festival, as it was celebrated in the traditional China on the plain in the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan, I have regarded the festival as a system of symbols, providing information about relationships and ecological factors vested with value. The festival has been presented as a closed system, and the present work is no more than an attempt to describe this system. This procedure must naturally be regarded as not wholly satisfactory from certain aspects. The small closed system was an integral part of the larger system, comprising the annual calendar of feasts. This in its turn was part of a still larger system of symbols. It is therefore reasonable to consider the relation of the dragon boat festival to the other annual feasts. A necessary condition for such a study must naturally be that the other festivals are rather well known. Before we can understand the great system we must become acquainted with its component parts. But as yet knowledge of this background is very fragmentary. In order to gain full knowledge of the ceremonialism in the region under consideration, it is important that each of the festivals in the annual calendar of feasts be studied separately. This need not, of course, ex-

SYMBOLIC CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE *Wu hing* SYSTEM

wood	fire	earth	metal	water
east	south	centre	west	north
		five		
		summer		
		solstice		
spring	summer	<i>Tuan wu</i>	autumn	winter
green	red	yellow	white	black
green	red	controlling	white	black
dragon boat	dragon boat	official	dragon boat	dragon boat
		clay figure		
		K'ü Yüan		
		rice		
		<i>küe shu</i>		
		soldier pots		
		bamboo		
		tubes with		
		rice		
		yellow paper		
		money		
<i>p'o pan</i>	<i>t'ou</i>	<i>k'i</i>	<i>ku</i>	<i>shao</i>
functionary	functionary	functionary	functionary	functionary
clapping	pan-pipes?	flag	drum	gong?
boards				
			dog	tortoise
			iron?	iron?
			paper	
				salt

five-colour symbols, five-coloured dragon boats

SYMBOLIC CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE *Yin yang* SYSTEM

<i>yin</i>	<i>yang</i>
female	male
bride givers	bride takers
outsiders	own <i>tsu</i> group
affinal kinship	agnatic kinship
inferior	superior
<i>yin ping</i>	ancestors
black	red
white	green
<i>küe shu</i>	vermicelli
salted eggs	
bad luck	good luck
low	high
sea	mountain
death	life
negative influences	positive influences
bad harvest	good harvest
<i>p'o</i> soul	<i>hun</i> soul
rice	beans
drum	fire
<i>lung</i> dragon as boat	
<i>k'iao lung</i> dragon	
water	
paper	
iron	
dog	
tortoise	
indigo	

clude tentative formulations of greater contexts. I would suggest such a hypothesis, to be tested in later works. The dragon boat festival told how the dead ancestors of a lineage visited their living progeny. A common custom at, for example New Year celebrations was for relatives to pay visits to each other. This social ceremonialism might have been extended to include dead ancestors. The visit paid by ancestors when they came in their dragon boats to the world of the living may perhaps be regarded as return visits in response to the visit paid to the dead by the living at the *Ts'ing ming* festival on the third of the third month, and on *Han shi*, 105 days after the summer solstice. On these occasions excursions were made to the graves of ancestors; the graves were then repaired and swept, and gifts of food were placed on them.

Similarities between the dragon boat festival and New Year celebrations can be discerned. The New Year celebrations also seem to have included a visit by dead ancestors, and a driving away of negative influences and illness. Important ceremonial activity took place between affinal relatives, and the five-colour symbol is also met with in the New Year feast. A careful study of such parallels should give valuable information on the essential features of the structure of the calendar of feasts.

Comparison with the ceremonialism in other parts of China should provide interesting information. It should be possible to throw light on the relation of local variations to ecological factors. Historical factors may prove to have played some role in the rise of such local differences. The material is rich, and presents many opportunities of gaining new and important results in the study of the ethnography of China. It is mentioned in the introduction to the present work that similar ceremonies are found in many places in East and Southeast Asia, outside the boundaries of China. The dragon boat festival, as celebrated on the Hupeh-Hunan plain, has a number of interesting parallels to the great State ceremonies held in August and October in Laos, for example.¹ Such comparisons may with time elucidate great cultural and social contexts in this part of the world.

The purpose of the present work has been to endeavour to take an ethnological view of a certain Chinese ethnographical material. If this study can serve as a starting-point for future discussion it has served its purpose.

¹ Archaimbault 1960, 384 ff.

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Index to Chinese Characters

a, o	阿 阿	ch'u fu	梧 嶺
ai	艾	Ch'u ts'ī	楚 辭
An hiang hien	安 鄉 縣	Ch'uan tai k'iao kang	穿 紫 橋 港
An hua hien	安 化 縣	chuei	追
An lu fu	安 陸 府	Chuei tsie	追 節
chan (divination)	占	ch'un fen shī	春 分 時
chan (to fight)	戰	Chung kie hou	忠 潔 侯
chang	丈	Ch'ung yang	重 陽
ch'ang	唱	fang	房
Ch'ang sha fu	長 沙 府	fen	焚
Ch'ang te fu	常 德 府	fen Mi	分 汨
Chao hun	招 魂	Fen tung si	分 東 西
Chao K'ü t'ing	招 屈 亭	Feng huang miao	鳳 凰 廟
Chao ling hou	昭 靈 侯	Feng huang shen	鳳 凰 神
Chao t'ien ts'an	昭 田 蠶	feng lung	風 龍
chen	鏢	Feng su	風 俗
Chen chu p'o	璽 珠 坡	Feng tung	風 洞
chī	只	Fu chou kang	覆 舟 岡
Chī fang	職 方	fu ch'uan	符 篆
ch'ī	汜	Han	漢
Chu Lang	竹 郎	Han ch'uan hien	漢 川 縣
Chu ma San lang	竹 馬 三 郎	han lung	旱 龍
Chu Wang	竹 王	Han shī	寒 食
chu yi	逐 疫	Han yang fu	漢 陽 府

Hao p'o	好婆	hūe shī	血食
Hei-miao	黑苗	jang	襖
hiang	饗	Jo shuei	弱水
Hing shan hien	興山縣	Juei	芮
ho teng	荷燈	Kan ch'uan	趕船
Ho tsai	何在	Kan t'ung ts'üan	感通果
Ho tsie	賀節	kao yi	糕飴
Hu kuang	湖廣	k'i (flag)	旗
Hu pe jung sin yi shu	湖北允心遺書	k'i (influence)	氣
Hua ch'uan	花船	k'i (prayer)	祈
Hua yang kuo chi	華陽國志	K'i chou	蘄州
Hua jung hien	華容縣	K'i lao	杞老
Huan hiang huo	還香火	K'i man ts'ung siao	溪蠻叢笑
Huan no	還儺	kia	家
Huang chou fu	黃州府	Kia Yi	賈諱
Huang kung Er po	黃公二伯	Kia yü hien	嘉魚縣
Huang kung San po	黃公三伯	Kiang Chi (= Tsiang Ki)	蔣驥
Huang kung Ta po	黃公大伯	Kiang tu kuan	江漢觀
Huang lung shan	黃龍山	kiao lung	蛟龍
hun	魂	k'iao	蕎
Hū Tsing yang	許旌陽	Kien li hien	監利縣
Hūe hai lei pien	學海類編	kin	觔
Hūe hiao	學校	King chou fu	荊州府
Hūe p'an kung	學泮宮	King chou yu wei	荊州右衛

King Ch'u sui shī kī	荆楚歲時記	K'ü Yüan	屈原
King ling hien	景陵縣	K'ü Yüan che	屈原宅
King shan hien	京山縣	K'ü Yüan hiang	屈原巷
King tu	競度	K'ü Yüan miao	屈原廟
King tu k'ü	競度曲	K'ü Yüan t'o	屈原沱
Kiu ko	九歌	K'ü Yüan ts'ī	屈原祠
Kiu shuei ko	九水歌	k'ue shu	角黍
k'üung k'üung	筍箚	kün tsiang	軍將
kou	狗	La	臘
ku	鼓	Lan kiang	蘭江
Ku kin t'u shu tsi ch'eng	古今圖書集成	Lao Kuan	老官
Ku lou yen	孤樓巖	Lao lung t'an	老龍潭
Ku tsi	古蹟	li (decorum)	禮
Kuang tsi hien	廣濟縣	li (mile)	里
kuei (demon)	鬼	Li chou	澧州
kuei (tortoise)	龜	Li ch'un	立春
Kuei chou	歸州	Li ling hien	醴陵縣
kuei wu	鬼巫	Li ling p'o	理靈坡
kung	官	Li Ts'ai	李才
Kung an hien	公安縣	Liang ch'uan	亮船
Kuo-ch'uan Ch'i lao	鍋圈犍佬	Liang shan	梁山
K'ü kung ts'ī	屈公祠	Liang Sung	梁松
K'ü t'an	屈潭	Liang tsī	梁子
k'ü yi	驅疫	Liang Wang	梁王

Lie chuan	列傳
lien	棟
Lin Siang hien	臨湘縣
Ling Kuan	靈宮
ling yi	靈異
liu	流
Liu yang hien	瀏陽縣
lo (joy)	樂
lo (pour out)	斟
Lo ch'ī miao pei	羅池廟碑
Lou shuei	漏水
Lu hien ts'ī	六賢祠
lu sī	鷺簪
lung	龍
Lung an shan	龍安山
lung chou	龍舟
lung ch'uan	龍船
Lung ch'uan ho	龍船河
Lung ch'uan pi	龍船陂
Lung ch'uan t'ou	龍船頭
Lung k'u	龍窟
Lung mo shī	龍磨石
Lung mu hu	龍母湖
lung siang	龍象

Lung siu shan	龍秀山
lung ts'ī	龍祠
Lung tsing	龍井
Lung Wang	龍王
Lung yang hien	龍陽縣
Lung yüan	龍淵
Ma ch'eng hien	麻城縣
Ma liao so	麻寮所
Ma Yüan	馬援
man	蠻
mao ch'uan (grass boat)	茅船
mao ch'uan (water-mallow boat)	茆船
mi	米
Mi	汨
Mi lo	汨羅
Mi lo shan	汨羅山
mi mien	米麴
Mi t'an	汨潭
miao	廟
Miao	苗
miao shen	廟神
mien (crown)	冕
mien (vermicelli)	麵
mien wo	麵窩

Mien yang chou	海陽州	Pu tsa lu	部雜錄
ming lü	命縷	Pu yi wen	部藝文
na jao	拏撓	p'u	蒲
Nao nien	鬧年	sai	賽
Ning hiang hien	寧鄉縣	Sai hua ch'uan	賽花船
no shen	傩神	San chung ts'ī	三忠祠
nū kia	女家	San hien ts'ī	三賢祠
ou	歐	San lu ho	三閩河
Ou Huei	歐回, 區曲	San lu kang	三閩港
pi kuei suei	避鬼祟	San lu ta fu	三閩大夫
P'i ping	辟兵	San lu ta fu hing ts'ī	三閩大夫行祠
piao	標	San lu ta fu miao	三閩大夫廟
piao fen	標墳	San lu ta fu mu	三閩大夫墓
ping kuan	兵罐	San lu ta fu ts'ī	三閩大夫祠
P'ing kiang hien	平江縣	San lu ts'ī	三閩祠
Po ch'uan	白船	san nū	散女
Po lung tsing	白龍井	shan	杉
po mao	白茅	Shan ch'uan	山川
Po mien shan	白面山	Shan hai king	山海經
Po sha tu	白沙渡	San hua hien	善化縣
p'o	魄	shan lao shī	山老師
p'o pan	拍板	Shang yüan	上元
pu	卜	shao	梢
Pu ki shī	部紀事	Shao sī ming	少司命

She jī	社日	Siang t'an hien	湘潭縣
shen	神	Siang yin hien	湘陰縣
shen chī	神紙	siao ling	小令
shen chou	神舟	Siao nien	小年
shen jen	神人	so, so	些些
shen kwei hing chuang	神鬼形狀	Su	蘇
Shen Pao sū	申包胥	Su kia tu	蘇家渡
sheng (phrase)	聲	Suei kung	歲功
sheng (sacrificial animals)	牲	Suei shu	隋書
sheng lao	牲牢	Suei yang hien	睢陽縣
Shī chou wei	施州衛	Sung ch'uan	送船
Shī lung shan	石龍山	Sung piao	送標
Shī tsu	氏族	Sung tsao shen	送竈神
shu shou	術手	Sung tsī hien	松滋縣
Shu tsiao	書蕉	Sung tsu jī	送祖日
Shuang chung ts'ī	雙忠祠	Sung wen	送瘟
shuei lao ya	水老鴉	Sung wen jī	送瘟日
sī	祀	Sung Yü	宋玉
Si ho Sa chen jen	西河薩人	sū kia	婿家
Si jang k'i	西灘溪	Sü ts'ī hie ki	續齊諧記
Si yin ping	息陞兵	Ta chao	大招
Siang	湘	Ta King t'ang	大荆塘
Siang hiang hien	湘鄉縣	Ta shī wu	大十五
siang ku	祥鼓	Ta ye hien	大冶縣

T'a ts'ing	踏青	Ts'ang lang shuei	滄浪水
T'ai p'ing sī	太平寺	ts'ang shu	蒼朮
Tang yang hien	當陽縣	ts'ao ch'uan	草船
T'ang	唐	Ts'ao shī yūe	草市嶽
T'ang kia k'i	唐家溪	tsi	祭
T'ang kia wan	唐家灣	tsī	字
tao	禱	ts'ī	禱
T'ao er	桃兒	Ts'ī hai	辭海
t'ao fu	桃符	Ts'ī li hien	慈利縣
T'ao yūan hien	桃源縣	Ts'ī miao	禱廟
Te an fu	德安府	tsiao	醮
Te shan	德山	tsiao jang	醮禳
Ti li chī	地理志	Ts'ien kiang hien	潛江縣
T'ie ch'uan miao	鐵船廟	ts'in	親
T'ie ch'uan t'an	鐵船潭	tsing	精
t'ie wu	鐵物	tsing p'o	精魄
T'ien chung	天中	Ts'ing chu piao	青竹標
T'ien wen	天問	Ts'ing lie kung	清烈公
to piao	奪標	Ts'ing lie kung miao	清烈公廟
tou (beans)	豆	Ts'ing lung t'i	青龍堤
tou (measure)	斗	Ts'ing ming	清明
tou (quarrel)	鬭	Ts'ing p'ing men	清平門
tuo su	苴粟	tsu (lineage)	族
t'ou	頭	tsu (stop)	阻

tsu chou	詛呪
tsung (dumpling)	粽
tsung (lineage)	宗
tsung tsu	宗族
Tuan	段
Tuan kia tsuei	段家婿
Tuan wu	端午
Tung hu	東湖
Tung t'ao ling	東桃嶺
T'ung shan hien	通山縣
wai	外
Wen shen	瘟神
Wen si miao	瘟司廟
Wu	午
wu	巫
Wu ch'ang hien	武昌縣
Wu ch'ang fu	武昌府
wu hi	巫覡
wu hing	五行
Wu jī	五日
wu kin	五金
Wu ling hien	武陵縣
Wu ling king tu lue	武陵競渡略
Wu lung kang	烏龍港

wu shī	巫師
Wu siang k'i	五畋谿
wu yang	巫陽
yang	陽
Yang shan	陽山
Yang sing pu	楊姓部
Yang Si ch'ang	楊嗣昌
Yang t'ou San lang	羊頭三郎
ye, ye	耶野
yen tan	鹽蛋
yi ch'an	易產
Yi ling chou	彝陵州
Yi tu hien	宜陸縣
Yi yang hien	益陽縣
Yi yüan	異苑
yin	陰
yin kia	姻家
yin ping	陰兵
Yin shan	隱山
yin si	引錫
yin ts'i	姻戚
ying	盈
Ying ch'uan	迎船
ying k'ü	迎去

Ying shan hien	應山縣	Yü sī shan	玉筍山
ying shen	迎神	Yüan	沅
ying sin	迎新	Yüan kiang hien	沅江縣
Yu hien	攸縣	Yüan shi ch'ang k'ing tai	元氏長慶集
Yung ting wei	永定衛	Yüan siao	元宵
Yü	漁	Yüe chou fu	岳州府
Yü fu	漁父	Yüe chou kuan king tu	岳州觀競渡
Yü huang	玉皇	Yüe yang	岳陽
Yü kia kang	漁家港	Yün meng hien	雲夢縣
Yü mi t'ien	玉米田		

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